

NATO approves military force in Kosovo

BRUSSELS (R) — NATO on Saturday cleared the way for the use of military force to help impose a peace deal in Kosovo, authorising alliance Secretary General Javier Solana to launch air strikes against Yugoslav targets if necessary. "The Council today has agreed in authorising [to order] air strikes against targets in Yugoslav territory," Solana said in a brief statement to reporters. "I will take this decision in the light of both parties' compliance with international commitments, with international requirements, including in particular assessment by the Contact Group..."

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
 جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية مستقلة عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية الراية

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Four killed in helicopter crash in Switzerland

SCHWYZ (AFP) — Four people were killed when their helicopter crashed into a mountain in the Schwyz canton in central Switzerland, police said Saturday. The cause of the crash, which occurred late Friday afternoon, is not yet known, police said. The pilot and three passengers were on a mission to set off explosives to unleash avalanches, a common method of ensuring safety on the ski slopes of Hoch-Ybrig, police said. It was not known whether the avalanches had begun at the time of the crash.

Carlos denies Cuban connection

PARIS (AP) — The man known as Carlos the Jackal has denied allegations that Cuba was among his sponsors in the 1970s, saying such charges amounted to a "campaign of infamy" against Fidel Castro. In a letter to the daily Le Monde, parts of which were published Saturday, Ilich Ramirez Sanchez — once considered the world's most wanted man — said he "never received logistical help from Cuba." The denial was in response to written allegations by a former ranking Cuban interior ministry official filed with French judicial officials in support of a law suit charging Castro with international drug trafficking and other crimes.

Protesters clash over army exhibit

KIEL (AP) — Brawls erupted Saturday in the northern German city of Kiel between extreme rightists and leftists over an exhibition on World War II German army atrocities. Police did not have immediate information on the number of injuries or arrests. About 1,000 extreme rightists marched to protest the exhibition, which shows atrocities committed by ordinary German soldiers, as well as special SS units, in eastern Europe during the war. About 400 leftists pelted them with stones and clashed with police, who ordered the march route shortened to try to contain the violence.

Explosion kills six people in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (AP) — Six people were killed, including a four-year-old child, by a bomb which Pakistani officials said was made in neighbouring India. The bomb was placed beneath the seat of a horse-drawn cart that was carrying eight passengers. All but one of the passengers died of their injuries. The eighth person is in critical condition, police said. Seven other people, who were standing nearby, also were injured in the explosion, they said. The bomb exploded as the horse-drawn cart crossed a bridge near Sialkot, some 60 kilometres north of the Punjab provincial capital of Lahore.

Eight hurt in N. Ireland attacks

BELFAST (AFP) — Eight people were injured and a house set on fire as sectarian violence, attributed to Catholic and Protestant paramilitary forces, continued to flare in Northern Ireland overnight. In the first incident, a group of armed men beat up two women and five men, all in their twenties, in a house at Newtownabbey early Saturday. They then set the house as well as a car, in which the young people had arrived, on fire. One of the victims was hospitalised. In a separate incident, a man in his thirties was shot and wounded when masked men broke into his home at Cookstown late Friday.

Prince Abdullah, Arafat discuss peace process developments

By Tareq Ayyoub

AMMAN — HRH Crown Prince Abdullah, the Regent, on Saturday received Palestinian President Yasser Arafat, who congratulated him on his appointment as Crown Prince and discussed with him the latest developments in the peace process.

The two leaders discussed bilateral ties and ways to cement them, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, said. It said Prince Abdullah stressed that Jordan will exert all possible efforts to "cooperate with the Palestinian brethren in all fields."

Palestinian Ambassador to Jordan Omar Khatib said Arafat briefed the Crown Prince on the deadlock in the peace process with Israel.

"President Arafat briefed His Royal Highness on the Israeli obstinacy in implementing what has been agreed upon between the two sides in the Wye River agreement," Khatib said.

"He also briefed the Crown Prince on Israel's decision to freeze the agreement and all issues the two sides had agreed upon," the ambassador told the Jordan Times, referring to the



HRH Crown Prince Abdullah, the Regent, receives Palestinian President Yasser Arafat at Raghadan Palace in Amman on Saturday (AFP photo)

Oct. 23, 1998 agreement which His Majesty King Hussein and U.S. President Bill Clinton played a major role in concluding.

Israel implemented the first phase of the agreement, which called for further Israeli army redeployment from the West Bank, but later the government of Prime Minister Benjamin

Netanyahu halted further implementation due to the upcoming Israeli elections.

Khatib said President Arafat briefed Prince Abdullah on Israel's refusal to allow the Gaza seaport to begin operations in accordance with the Wye River agreement.

He said Prince Abdullah and Arafat also discussed the

forthcoming tripartite meeting of the foreign ministers of Jordan, Egypt and Palestine, expected to convene in Amman.

The ambassador said no date has been fixed for the ministers' meeting, but added that the focus of discussion will be on the logjam in the peace process.

King completes course of treatment at Mayo

By Caroline Faraj

AMMAN — His Majesty King Hussein on Saturday completed a course of chemotherapy and is scheduled to undergo a bone marrow transplant on Tuesday, Jordanian Ambassador to the U.S. Marwan Muasher said.

"The King completed Saturday a four-day course of chemotherapy, and he will undergo a bone marrow transplant on Tuesday, which is supposed to last for two days," Muasher told the Jordan Times in a telephone interview from the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota.

The King's private physician, Samir Faraj, yesterday said the King was in stable condition.

"His Majesty's health condition is stable, and the bone marrow transplant, due to last for two days, will take place on Tuesday, as part of the treatment plan," Faraj said.

On Friday Muasher told the Jordan Times that the King was scheduled to receive a course of chemotherapy as part of a

10-day treatment programme "intended to achieve a more successful remission."

King Hussein underwent six months of treatment at the Mayo Clinic for non-Hodgkins lymphoma before making a triumphant return to Jordan on Jan. 19, but his doctors' concerns over a recurrent fever and blood count abnormalities forced him to return last Tuesday to the U.S. for further medical attention.

When asked when doctors estimated the King's treatment would be completed, Muasher said: "The doctors' assessment of the King's condition is conducted on a daily basis."

The ambassador also described the King's general condition as better, and said: "The King is in constant contact with HRH Crown Prince Abdullah, the Regent."

"The King was briefed by Crown Prince Abdullah about the present developments in Jordan, and he is giving his instructions and advice," he added.

King Hussein designated

his eldest son Prince Abdullah as heir to the Throne on Monday, replacing his uncle, HRH Prince Hassan, 51, who had been heir for more than three decades.

Abdullah, who turned 37 on Saturday, is serving as Regent in the King's absence.

The King had received a stem cell transplant following six courses of chemotherapy which began last July. The 63-year-old monarch announced at the end of that treatment that he had fully recovered. But when symptoms of fever and blood count abnormalities were indicated last week, his physicians said they were taking no chances and recommended that he return to the clinic.

King Hussein's non-Hodgkins lymphoma is his second bout with cancer in six years. He underwent surgery at the Mayo Clinic in 1992 to remove his left kidney and cancerous cells from his ureter.

In April 1998, surgeons at the Mayo Clinic removed a benign growth from his prostate.

Regent expresses appreciation for congratulatory messages IAF congratulates Crown Prince on designation as heir

AMMAN (Petra) — HRH Crown Prince Abdullah, the Regent, Saturday thanked the Jordanian people for their good wishes and congratulations upon becoming heir to the Throne.

In a letter to the nation, the Crown Prince also voiced his deep appreciation and gratitude to the heads of state and senior officials as well as citizens of Arab and foreign countries who congratulated him on this occasion.

"I am pleased to send greetings to all members of the Jordanian family and to express deep pride in His Majesty King Hussein's clan, who have expressed their affection to the Monarch and the nation and vowed to uphold the sublime principles on which the homeland was founded and the great message to which Jordan has

dedicated itself to achieve," the Regent said.

Referring to the past few days during which thousands of well-wishers assembled to congratulate him, Prince Abdullah said: "You have overwhelmed me with your noble and true feelings by calling at Raghadan Palace from all parts of the country to express your sincere feelings and congratulations over the mission entrusted to me by His Majesty."

You have proved to be worthy of the King's trust and have displayed unity, cohesion and affiliation to the dear homeland and its noble message of defending the nation's causes and its future generations."

"Wherever you might be in this country and elsewhere in the world, I send you my deep thanks and appreciation for the sincere affection and brotherly

and noble feelings, and I also express my deep gratitude and appreciation to the heads of state of the Arab and foreign countries and their senior officials who have expressed their congratulations to me," the Crown Prince said.

In his letter, Prince Abdullah implored God Almighty to help him serve Jordan and the Jordanian people under King Hussein's wise leadership.

Also Saturday, the Regent received a congratulatory cable from the secretary general of the Islamic Action Front (IAF), Abdul Latif Arabiyat, on his designation as Crown Prince.

The cable said: "On behalf of the members and leaders of the IAF, I hereby send you my sincere, heartfelt congratulations on the Royal trust and on your appointment as Crown Prince, praying to God the Almighty to

protect you and keep you for the betterment of this country and its people."

The Regent also received several representatives of Arab leaders, who congratulated the Prince on his designation as heir to the Throne, and inquired about His Majesty King Hussein's health. The Regent received Prince Abdul Aziz Ben Abdullah Al Saud, the son of Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah and a Saudi royal court advisor, Omani court minister and Sultan Qaboos Ben Sa'ed's special envoy, Major General Ali Ben Majed Mou'amar, Sheikh Tamim Ben Khalifah, the son of Qatar's Emir Sheikh Hamad Ben Khalifah Al Thani, and Al Sa'idi Qadhafi, the son of Libyan President Muammar Qadhafi.

Prince Abdullah also received congratulatory cables

on the occasion of his 37th birthday, which he celebrated Saturday. Messages were sent by Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh, Senate President Zeid Rifai, the president of the Judicial Council and Court of Cassation, Taher Hikmat, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Field Marshal Abdul Hafez Mirza Kaabneh, Royal Court Chief Jawad Anani, the director of the General Intelligence Department, Major General Samih Batikh, Public Security Department Director General Major General Nasoub Muheiddin, Chief Islamic Justice and the King's advisor for Islamic affairs Izzeddin Khatib Tamimi, Lower House Speaker Abdul Hadi Majali and Jordanian Businessmen Association President Hamdi Tabba.

Jordan's embassy in Kuwait expected to reopen next week

By Caroline Faraj

AMMAN — A Jordanian diplomat will leave for Kuwait today to prepare for the reopening of the Jordanian embassy there next week.

Foreign Minister Abdul Ilah Khatib is to visit Kuwait next Saturday at the invitation of his Kuwaiti counterpart Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad Al Sabah, an official told the Jordan Times yesterday.

Nabil Talhoumi, the last ambassador to the Gulf emirate, is scheduled to leave for Kuwait today in order to prepare for the reopening of the embassy there, expected to take place during Khatib's visit.

The reopening of the embassy will put an end to a rift in diplomatic relations since ties were strained following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990.

Khatib was quoted as saying that the decision for reopening the embassy, "which signals the strong ties between the two brotherly countries," came after a meeting here between HRH Crown Prince Abdullah, the Regent, and Kuwaiti Interior Minister Sheikh Mohammad Al Khalid Al Sabah.

The move appears to be the latest in a series of gestures of support for the new heir to the Throne from Gulf states.

Crown Prince Abdullah, 37, is known to have close ties with young members of the ruling families in the Gulf. He made a

tour of several Gulf countries, except Kuwait, last October.

Earlier, Khatib told the Jordan Times that during his visit to Kuwait, "we will be discussing all files related to our brotherly relations, and ways and means of improving them for the benefit of our peoples."

Meanwhile, the families of eight Jordanian prisoners in Kuwait, have been urging the two governments to focus on their release.

During the last few years, the Kuwaiti government has released a number of Jordanian prisoners.

However, diplomatic sources at the Kuwaiti embassy in Amman said they expected that Kuwait will release the remaining prisoners on Kuwait's National Day, which falls on Feb. 25.

Talhoumi, 55, is the head of the Economics Department at the Foreign Ministry. He formerly served as Jordan's ambassador to Kuwait until the end of the Iraqi occupation.

During the Gulf crisis, Kuwait downgraded ties with Jordan after it accused Amman of supporting Iraq. But relations between Amman and Kuwait began to thaw in late 1995 when Jordan began to distance itself from Baghdad, calling on Iraq to implement U.N. Security Council resolutions.

Arab interior ministers condemn 'all forms' of terrorism

By Tareq Ayyoub

AMMAN — Arab interior ministers on Saturday ended a two-day meeting with a strong denunciation of terrorism and a call on Arab states not to allow terrorists to take shelter in their territories.

The final communiqué of the conference, which was attended by 22 Arab ministers, also urged Arab states to refrain from extending any type of assistance to terrorists who are targeting not only Arab security but other countries as well.

"The Council of Arab Interior Ministers... strongly

denounces terrorism in all forms... and supports all efforts aimed at holding an international conference to combat terrorism," the communiqué said.

The council "reaffirms its commitment to fight terrorism as a part of the Arab Strategy to Combat Terrorism," signed in Cairo in April 1998, the statement said.

"We call upon all countries where terrorist groups take shelter to prevent them from using their territories or to benefit from their rules or to obtain assistance or arms, or practise any criminal acts or disseminate propaganda that endangers the security and safety of all countries," the statement said.

It noted that Arab states differentiate between terrorism and "the right of people to struggle against foreign aggression and occupation by all means, including armed struggle to liberate their [occupied] lands."

The last part of the communiqué referred to the Israeli occupation of Palestinian and Lebanese territories.

The conference, which was inaugurated by HRH Crown Prince Abdullah, the Regent,

was scheduled to last for three days but participants, for unspecified reasons, shortened it to two days.

Saudi Interior Minister Nayef Ben Abdul Aziz, who met on Saturday with Prince Abdullah, told reporters that Arab states were determined to "activate" the anti-terrorism strategy in the coming few months after it is ratified by their respective states.

Only eight countries, namely Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, Palestine, Sudan, Algeria, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain, have so far ratified the agreement, which was signed

by all Arab states.

The Saudi minister attributed the delay in ratification to "technical reasons and laws of some Arab states."

The secretary general of the Council, Ahmad Salem, denied that the delay was due to "reservations" by some Arab states to the strategic accord.

"All Arab states are supporting the agreement. There is a consensus among Arab countries to uphold this phenomenon from our region," Salem told the press following the conference.

(Continued on page 2)

U.S. warplanes attack six sites in northern no-fly zone in Iraq

Agencies

U.S. PLANES flying from a base in southern Turkey attacked six air defence sites in northern Iraq on Saturday, the U.S. Air Force said.

The air strikes, which marked an escalation of attacks in the no-fly zone, began around 3 p.m. Iraqi time (1200 GMT) after Iraqi radar targeted the U.S. aircraft, according to statements from a joint Turkish-U.S. airbase at Incirlik, southern Turkey.

"Coalition aircraft were targeted by Iraqi radars near Mosul while conducting routine enforcement of the northern no-fly zone," the base said.

The aircraft, acting in self-defence, launched strikes on a radar site and its missile launchers, four anti-aircraft missile sites and a surface-to-air missile site in the Mosul area.

Damage to Iraqi forces was being assessed, the base said.

American and British warplanes have enforced the no-fly zone north of the 36th Parallel since the 1991 Gulf War to protect the Kurdish population there from attack by Iraqi government forces.

U.S. aircraft have launched a series of air strikes on Iraqi air defences in northern and southern Iraq in recent weeks.

An Iraqi military statement said Saturday's attacks had been carried out with 17 missiles or bombs.

A spokesman told the Iraqi News Agency that 12 formations of warplanes had entered Iraq from Turkey backed by an AWACS radar plane.

He said that allied fighter planes had also been in action in the southern no-fly zone after taking off from bases in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

He said that these had comprised 14 formations of warplanes, again with AWACS radar backing.

Those from Kuwait carried out 16 sorties and those from Saudi Arabia 20 sorties, he said, without giving

more details of their actions.

"The hostile planes fled back to the evil dens they came from," the spokesman said.

Iraq said on Saturday it had defused an unexploded cruise missile fired by U.S. planes at its northern oil-rich city of Kirkuk.

The Incirlik base was briefly put on a state of alert on Thursday on fears of an Iraqi missile attack, which proved to be unfounded. Earlier in January the United States moved a battery of Patriot missiles to Incirlik at Turkey's request.

(Continued on page 2)

French MPs condemn strikes

BAGHDAD (AP) — The head of a visiting French parliamentary delegation on Saturday condemned the U.S.-led air strikes on Iraq, saying they would only complicate efforts to resolve the crisis.

"Nothing justified the American strikes on Baghdad and other targets," MP Rosemary Bachelot-Narquin told reporters after a meeting with French MP Jean-Marie Le Pen, who is visiting Iraq.

Bachelot-Narquin said the meeting was the first official contact between the French and Iraqi governments since the start of the crisis.

She said the French MPs' visit was aimed at strengthening ties between the two countries and that she would be in Iraq for several days.

سكينة عبد الوهاب

'Alleged Tunisian associate of Ben Laden held in Pakistan'

ISLAMABAD (AFP) — Pakistani authorities have arrested a Tunisian national suspected of being a close associate of Saudi dissident Osama Ben Laden, a newspaper reported Saturday.

Quoting official sources, Dawn newspaper from Karachi said a team of security agencies including the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) had been formed to interrogate the Tunisian, identified as Al Babour Habib.

Babour was arrested at the Karachi airport as he arrived from London via Kuwait, the report said, adding the suspect planned to travel to Afghanistan to meet Ben Laden.

He presented at immigration a fake French passport bearing the name Mustapha Chemli, but documents and hand-written letters in Arabic found in his luggage disclosed his real name, according to the report.

Ben Laden has been

indicted in the United States for allegedly masterminding last year's twin bombings in Tanzania and Kenya that killed more than 200 people.

Afghanistan's ruling Taliban militia has rejected the allegations against their "guest" and refused to expel him.

In August the United States launched cruise missile attacks on alleged training camps of Ben Laden in Afghanistan.

Iranian president set to visit Germany — report

BONN (AFP) — German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder is "delighted" at a planned visit by Iranian President Mohammad Khatami, spokesman Bodo Hombach was quoted Saturday as saying.

Chancellor Schröder is set to travel to Tehran next week when he will hand over an invitation from Schröder for Khatami to visit Germany in the spring, the daily Die Welt reported.

Khatami's European trip is also expected to take in Italy and France.

While in Tehran, Hombach will seek to improve

economic and cultural ties, as well as pave the way for a Khatami visit, the paper said.

However the minister would not confirm that the Iranian president would receive a formal invitation.

Another point of concern for Germany, and Hombach, is the case of Helmut Hofer, German businessman who faces the death penalty in Iran.

Hofer was sentenced to death early last year for having an affair with a Muslim woman, not permitted under the laws of Iran's Islamic Republic.

Die Welt saw Hombach's

visit as a sign that the Hofer matter will be happily resolved.

Twenty years after the Islamic revolution, Iran has toned down its harsh rhetoric and shifted its goal from exporting its radical ideology to seeking more normal relations with the rest of the Muslim World.

It was not until Khatami's election in May 1997 that Iran managed to charm the outside world with his detente policies, trying to reintegrate the country into the world community.



Two masked members of the Hamas sham the way Palestinian policemen treat their prisoners on Saturday during a demonstration in the West Bank town of Nablus, to protest against the detention of Hamas members in Palestinian-controlled jails (AFP photo)

American public supports Palestinian state — poll

AMMAN (J.T.) — By a margin of more than two to one, American voters overwhelmingly support U.S. recognition of Palestinian statehood, according to a poll commissioned by the Arab American Institute (AAI) and conducted by Zogby International of Utica, New York, an AAI statement said.

The Jan. 28 poll surveyed 1,011 likely voters. When asked the question, "If the Palestinians declare an independent state, should the United States recognize it or not?" 54.5 per cent said that the United States should recognize a Palestinian state, while only 21.2 per cent said the United States should not. The poll margin of error is +/- 3.2 per cent.

While Americans support a Palestinian state by a huge margin, some con-

gressional leaders continue to propose legislation opposing Palestinian self-determination, the statement said.

The proposed resolution circulated by Matt Salmon (R-AZ) and Eliot Engel (D-NY) calls on the Clinton administration to unequivocally assert U.S. opposition to the unilateral declaration of a Palestinian state.

Because the Palestinians have indicated that they would only make their declaration of statehood when the Oslo process expired, such language is uncalled-for, one-sided and in direct opposition to agreements brokered and signed by the United States. Congressional leaders who pressure one party or unilaterally add new conditions to negotiated agreements only undercuts the administration authority to conduct foreign policy and its role

as honest broker.

Not only do Congress actions hamper the peace process, they fly in the face of U.S. public opinion, AAI President James J. Zogby stated. Instead of trying to add new conditions to U.S. brokered agreements, Congress should support the administration position that all parties implement their obligations to the Wye and Oslo agreements so that this peace process can be concluded by May 4, 1999.

Instead of taking one side and applying pressure only to the Palestinians, Congress should listen to the views of their constituents who overwhelmingly support a fair and just solution to the Middle East peace process which includes security for Israel and a Palestinian state, Zogby added.

Arab interior ministers condemn 'all forms' of terrorism

(Continued from page 1)

"There is no reservation from any member to any article of the agreement, and the ratification of the treaty is nothing but a matter of time," he said.

He said a draft plan that would govern the extradition of criminal suspects among Arab states is under study by member states of the council.

"The final draft has not been finalized. It is a matter of time before we come up with the plan, which is aimed at preventing evil elements from traveling among Arab states and taking shelter in these countries," Salem told reporters.

"We are keen on extraditing criminals and on strengthening control measures on our borders in order to stem the illegal trafficking of weapons, ammunition and explosives that could be used for terrorist acts," he added.

Responding to whether or not the Arab ministers discussed complaints by some Arab countries that neighboring states are facilitating the smuggling of weapons and ammunition through their territories, Salem stressed, "There is a seriousness on the part of the Arab ministers, without exception, to fight this phenomenon."

"All members are concerned

for the security and stability of Arab states because the internal security of any member state is part of the overall Arab security," he said.

The final communiqué also urged Arab states to extend all facilities to Arab citizens wishing to obtain visas to travel among Arab countries.

The conference also approved a memorandum of understanding to intensify cooperation between the council and the Ottawa-based International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol).

The communiqué also called for extending assistance to the Palestinian National Authority

police and endorsed several other agreements related to terrorism, drug trafficking and security cooperation among member states.

Also Saturday, Prince Abdullah met with several of the Arab interior ministers, who expressed their appreciation to the Kingdom for hosting the conference.

Among those who met the Crown Prince were: Hussein Mohammad Harb of Yemen, Mohammad Ben Khalifah of Bahrain, Idrees Basi of Morocco, Mohammad Badi of the UAE, Sheikh Mohammad Khalid Al Sabah of Kuwait, and Abdul Malik Salal of Algeria.

U.S. planes attack six sites in northern Iraq

(Continued from page 1)

In the first of Saturday's attacks, a U.S. Air Force F-15E Strike Eagle launched an AGM-130 missile at a radar site. Two F-15Es dropped two laser-guided bombs on missile launchers at the same radar site.

Shortly after 3 p.m. Iraqi

officials have expressed concern about the rising level of conflict.

A Turkish newspaper on Saturday quoted President Suleyman Demirel as saying he had warned U.S. President Bill Clinton against the consequences of his administration's plans to support Iraqi opposition groups in a

bid to overthrow President Saddam Hussein, drawing a parallel with the Vietnam war.

"Let me tell you one thing — this business resembles Vietnam. I said this to President Bush and I said it to Clinton," Demirel was quoted as telling reporters informally at a cocktail party.

The Iraqi press and officials have launched scathing attacks on Saudi Arabia and Kuwait in recent weeks for providing logistical support for U.S.-led bombing raids on Iraq in December, the most severe offensive since the 1991 Gulf War.

Iraq's parliament on Wednesday accused the Kuwaiti and Saudi governments of being agents of the United States and Britain, and urged Arabs to overthrow the two regimes.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 4773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

16:10 Cartoon — The Pink Panther
16:20 — The Pumpkin Patch
16:30 — Lift Off
17:00 — Doc. — Survival
17:30 — Vid Kids
18:00 — Le Grand Secret
19:00 — Le Journal
19:15 — French Programme
19:30 — News Headlines
19:35 Comedy — If Not For You
20:00 — French Programme
20:30 Drama — Walker, Texas Ranger
21:15 — Doc. — Eating and Health
21:30 — Behind the Scenes
22:00 — News in English
22:30 — Bitter Blood
23:10 Drama — Double House
23:59 — End of T.X.

PRAYER TIMES

05:07 — Fajr
06:26 — (Sunrise) Dhuhr
11:49 — Dhuhr
14:46 — Asr
17:12 — Maghreb
18:31 — Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Swefieh, Tel. 5920740
Assemblies of God Church Tel.
4632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 4624590
Terra Sancta Church Tel.
4637366

Anglican Church Tel.
4624853/4624811.
St. Atram Syrian Orthodox
Church Tel. 4771751.
Amman International Church
Tel. 5865897
German-speaking Evangelical
Congregation Tel. 5688404
The Evangelical Local Church
in Amman Tel. 5811295
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter
Day Saints Tel. 4654932
St. John the Baptist at De la
Salle College Tel. 5661757
Church of the Annunciation
Tel. 4637440
Greek Orthodox Church Tel.
4646138
Church of Presentation, Swefieh
Tel. 5920146
The United Catholic Church
Tel. 4624757
The English-Language
Catholic Parish Tel. 4614190
Evangelical Free Church Tel.
4892679
The Baptist Church Tel.
4633052
The Armenian Catholic
Church Tel. 4771331
The American Orthodox
Church Tel. 4775261

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department
of Meteorology
Predictions are based on the latest
available information.

will prevail with temperatures rising slightly and winds southeasterly to southwesterly light to moderate. In Aqaba winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Amman 04/18
Aqaba 07/24
Deserts 01/19
Jordan Valley 08/23

Yesterday's high temperatures:
Amman 16, Aqaba 22 Humidity
readings: Amman 27 per cent,
Aqaba 19 per cent.

Following are the temperatures expected today in the following areas:

Ajloun 05/13
Jerash 07/18
Um Qays 06/17
Madaba 05/18
Petra 06/18
Dead Sea 13/25

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Abbas Al Hakim 4885446
Dr. Arafat Ashbah 5602507
Dr. Ayman Muhaseb 4875748
Dr. Jamal Jharah 5347351

AMMAN:
Firas Pharmacy 5661912
Al Salam Pharmacy 4636730
Mayadah Pharmacy 5537004
Rukn Al Dawa Pharmacy 5536169

IRBID:
Dr. Mohammed Al Shari (02)7100588
Fou'ad Pharmacy (02)275360

ZARQA:
Dr. Khalil Abu Hussein (09)85001
Palestine Pharmacy (09)85362

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 4637111
Civil Defence Department 5661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 4630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police, 192, 4621111, 4637777
Fire Brigade 4617101
Blood Bank 4775121
Highway Police 5343402
Traffic Police 4896390
Public Security Dept. 4630321
Hotel Complaints 5605800
Price Complaints 5661176
Water & Sewerage Complaints 4897467
Amman Municipality Complaints 4787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 0132
Central Amman Telephone Repairs 4633101
4633101

Jordan Television 4773111
Radio Jordan 4774111
Water Authority 5680100
J. Electricity Authority 5815615
Electric Power Co. 4636381
RJ Flight Information 44-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 44-53300

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 5921199
The Islamic, Abdli 56661317
Hussein Medical Centre 5856856
Luzmila 4630195
Khalidi Maternity 46442816
Akileh Maternity 4642412
Jabal Amman Maternity 4642362
Malhas, J. Amman 4636140
Palestine, Shmeisani 5607071
Shmeisani Hospital 5607431
Jordan Hospital 5607530
University Hospital 5353444
Al-Muasher Hospital 56672719
Al-Ahli, Abdali 56641646
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 4777101/3
Al-Bashir 4775111/26
Army, Marka 4891611/5
Queen Alia Hospital 5157100
Arnal Hospital 5607155
Al Amal Cancer Centre 5353000

ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)883323
Zarqa National Hospital (09)800560
Ibn Sina Hospital (09)986731
Al Hikma Modern Hospital (09)990990

IRBID:
Princess Basma Hospital (02)275555
Roman Catholic Hospital 02/272275
Ibn Al Nafess Hospital 02/7101372, (02)7103101
Rosary Sisters Hospital 02/7102831, (02)7102011
Speciality Hospital 02/7103100

AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)2940111

FOR THE TRAVELLER QUEEN ALIA AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (44)53200-5, where it should always be verified. Information on other flights can be supplied on phone 44 (52700). Information on Royal Wings flights can be supplied on phone 4875201-5

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
07:35 — Bangkok, Doha (RJ)
08:25 — Bombay (RJ)
08:35 — Jeddah (RJ)
08:50 — Dhahran, Riyadh (RJ)

09:50 — Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
17:15 — New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
18:05 — Athens (RJ)
18:25 — Madrid, Geneva (RJ)
19:15 — Paris, Rome (RJ)
19:20 — London, Vienna (RJ)
22:15 — Frankfurt (RJ)
22:50 — Vienna (RJ)
23:59 — Cairo (RJ)

Other Flights

12:30 — Aden (TY)
14:35 — Istanbul (TK)
18:00 — Dubai, Damascus (EK)
18:40 — Beirut (ME)
18:45 — Kiev (6U)
19:05 — Paris (AF)
20:25 — Tel Aviv (LY)
20:40 — Cairo (MS)
22:25 — London, Damascus (BA)
23:35 — Amsterdam (KL)
23:55 — Larnaca (CY)
00:55 — Bucharest (RO)
02:00 — Rome (AZ)

Royal Wings (RW) Flights

07:50 Aqaba (arriving at QAIA) (RW)
10:30 Tel Aviv (arriving at QAIA) (RW)
16:00 Aqaba (arriving at Marka Airport) (RW)
17:45 Haifa (arriving at QAIA) (RW)
18:45 Tel Aviv (arriving at QAIA) (RW)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
05:00 — Aqaba, Paris (RJ)
05:20 — Beirut (RJ)
11:00 — Rome, Frankfurt (RJ)
11:25 — Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)
11:30 — Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
12:15 — London (RJ)
12:15 — Athens (RJ)
12:40 — Aqaba, Vienna (RJ)
20:25 — Cairo (RJ)
20:30 — Jeddah (RJ)
20:35 — New Delhi (RJ)
20:45 — Damascus (RJ)
21:00 — Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
23:30 — Bangkok (RJ)
00:10 — Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta (RJ)
00:30 — Jeddah (RJ)

Other Flights

07:10 — Frankfurt (LH)
13:30 — Aden (TY)
15:35 — Istanbul (TK)
19:00 — Dubai (EK)
19:40 — Kiev (6U)
20:00 — Bangkok (ME)
21:10 — Tel Aviv (LY)
21:40 — Cairo (MS)
00:35 — Amsterdam (KL)
01:55 — Bucharest (RO)
03:00 — Rome (AZ)

Royal Wings (RW) Flights

08:15 Tel Aviv (arriving from QAIA) (RW)
08:30 Aqaba (from Marka Airport) (RW)
14:30 Haifa (from Marka Airport) (RW)
16:30 Tel Aviv (from Marka Airport) (RW)

Home
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Jordan

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By Hind-Lara
AMMAN — The
Jordanian Air
Force (JAF) has
received a new
batch of F-15E
Strike Eagles from
the United States
Air Force (USAF).
The aircraft were
delivered to the
JAF at the Queen
Alia International
Airport in Amman.
The JAF has
received a total of
12 F-15E aircraft
in three batches.
The first batch of
6 aircraft was
delivered in 1997.
The second batch
of 6 aircraft was
delivered in 1998.
The third batch
of 6 aircraft was
delivered in 1999.
The F-15E is a
multi-mission
fighter aircraft
capable of both
air-to-air and
air-to-ground
combat. It is the
most advanced
fighter aircraft
in the JAF's
inventory.

Brotherhood hails appointment of Crown Prince Abdullah, requests meeting to address political, economic issues

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Muslim Brotherhood has hailed His Majesty King Hussein's decision to appoint HRH Prince Abdullah, the Regent, as Crown Prince, and reiterated its allegiance to the Hashemite Throne.

"King Hussein has acted within his constitutional rights by changing the line of succession to the Throne, and we wish Crown Prince Abdullah all success," Abdul Majeed Thneibat, the overall leader of the Brotherhood, was quoted as saying in the Arabic press on Saturday.

Thneibat, who paid tribute to HRH Prince Hassan for his service to the nation during more than three decades as Crown Prince, said he asked Prince Abdullah for a

meeting when he joined the thousands of Jordanians of all walks of life to congratulate the new Crown Prince at Raghadan Palace on Thursday.

Prince Abdullah, who has represented Jordan and the King in many missions abroad, especially dealing with security and military issues, and has long served behind the scenes, was appointed as Crown Prince last week.

"I hope a meeting can be arranged soon, so that we can explain our positions and give our suggestions," Thneibat was quoted as saying.

The Brotherhood stressed that neither its policies nor its educational, political, and charity activities will change.

The powerful movement, which was allowed

to work as a "charitable organisation" through the 1957-1989 martial laws and grew deep roots in Jordanian social fabric, has long campaigned for political reforms and fiercely opposed the 1994 peace treaty with Israel.

"There is a national Islamic need to review the country's policies, especially regarding relations with other Arab countries and the Zionists," Thneibat said.

"While we demand the abrogation of the Wadi Araba [peace] treaty [with Israel], we also ask the government that [the treaty] be immediately preempted and Zionist infiltration be stopped."

The Brotherhood's leader maintained in the interview with the Arabic press that the peace treaty

"created imbalance and frustration, which was manifested in a regression of public freedoms, rising unemployment, skyrocketing crime, and social, media, and moral corruption."

The Muslim Brotherhood reiterated its call for a comprehensive review in the political and economic spheres, emphasising the need to reactivate civil society institutions and enhance their role.

Thneibat highlighted the urgency of enacting a new elections law to guarantee fair and democratic elections and ensure the government's neutrality during all phases of the electoral process.

The Brotherhood's leader strongly opposed the dissolution of the current 13th Parliament and

the convening of early parliamentary elections — an idea recently floated in some opposition and government circles — before a more modern and democratic electoral law is drafted, debated, and endorsed.

"The Islamic movement has been targeted," Thneibat denounced, "with the precise objective of reducing its power and influence."

He criticised a new draft law dealing with Awqaf, which he said "will put all the workers of Islam under the umbrella of the Awqaf Ministry, thus narrowing the scope of their activities and reducing their work within rigid government regulations and bureaucracy."

Jordan starts trade talks in Baghdad, looks for joint venture opportunities

BAGHDAD — A Jordanian delegation started talks in Baghdad on Saturday on boosting trade between the two neighbouring countries.

"Iraq endeavours to expand and develop fields of economic and trade cooperation with Jordan," the Iraqi News Agency (INA) quoted Iraqi Trade Minister Mohammad Mehdi Saleh as saying in the meeting with the Jordanian team.

Undersecretary of the Ministry of Industry and Trade Mohammad Halaqia said his delegation would

discuss how to encourage the establishment of joint companies and expand exports, INA said.

Iraq and Jordan agreed last year to build a \$350-million, 750-kms oil pipeline linking the Iraqi pumping station in Haditha northwest of Baghdad to Jordan's Zarqa oil refinery northeast of Amman.

INA quoted Saleh as saying Iraq wanted cooperation to go beyond agreements made so far.

Since the Gulf War over Kuwait, Iraq has been exporting more than

75,000 barrels of oil per day to Jordan, part of which is charged at market prices and the rest at undisclosed softer terms.

Jordan's oil purchases from Iraq are exempted from U.N. sanctions which ban Baghdad from exporting oil as punishment for its 1990 invasion of Kuwait. The United Nations has allowed Iraq since December 1996 to sell limited quantities of oil to buy food and medicine for Iraqis.

Jordan's sound foundations ensure continuity

By Randa Habib
Agence France Presse

AMMAN — Jordan, a country inextricably linked to its ruler King Hussein, has been built on a set of strong yet undeveloped institutions which experts believe will provide a firm base for the post-Hussein era.

King Hussein, who has ruled Jordan for more than 46 years "has built a real legal state over the years, based on a set of institutions with clearly-defined functions," said a former Jordanian official.

"Although these institutions have not been fully developed, they should provide a strong base for the development of Jordan," he said.

Jordan's Constitution — originally drafted in 1947, one year after the country gained its independence — grants the king extensive powers over the government but also provides for a clear "distribution of power" rather than absolute monarchy.

The king is charged with hiring and firing the prime minister and has to approve his choice of ministers, but the Constitution terms him "not politically responsible" and does not grant him unlimited powers.

In accordance with this principle, Royal Decrees must be initiated by the prime minister and interior minister.

Legislative power is also secured by the Constitution in a two-chamber parliament whose lower house has been democratically elected since regular elections began in 1989.

About a third of the 80 elected deputies represent the opposition, but party politics is still relatively unknown in Jordan," he said.

Jordan's Constitution — originally drafted in 1947, one year after the country gained its independence — grants the king extensive powers over the government but also provides for a clear "distribution of power" rather than absolute monarchy.

Although Palestinian refugees and their progeny make up a large proportion of the population, it is the large

'King Hussein has always wanted his country to reach a stage of political maturity that would allow him to create a constitutional monarchy'

traditional pro-monarchy east Jordanian families who occupy the majority of key posts in the country.

"A member of the king's entourage pointed out the practical reality of Jordanian politics.

"Unfortunately, although the constitution puts a lot of weight on the roles of the government and parliament, they have rarely played out their parts to the full," he said.

"Prime ministers have generally been paralysed, without the backing of an independent political force," he said.

But he said that whereas King Hussein's great charisma and political acumen have caused politicians to bow to what they believe to be his will, Crown Prince Abdullah may allow officials to take more initiatives when he becomes king.

"King Hussein has always wanted his country to reach a stage of political maturity that would allow him to create a constitutional monarchy after

the example of Great Britain" where the monarch has a mainly symbolic role, he said.

The army is also controlled by the monarch who serves as supreme commander and appoints loyal soldiers to all the top ranks. The armed forces however, are not allowed to vote in elections. The judiciary, meanwhile, has proved its independence in recent years, with several supreme court rulings overturning government decisions such as a restrictive amendment to the press law last year.

"In times of crisis, the state's institutions work together with the prime objective of securing the country's stability," former prime minister Taher Masi told AFP.

This was the case during the King's recent six month absence for cancer treatment in the United States, Masi said, and is expected to be the case in the future.

What's Going On

Films

"Le Boucher" at the French Cultural Centre, Jabal Weibdeh on Monday Feb. 1 at 6:30 p.m. and 8:30 p.m.
"The Godfather" (pt.II) at Books@Café, Jabal Amman at 8:30 p.m. (Tel. 4650458). (Part III will be screened on Monday Feb. 1 at 8:30 p.m.)

Lecture

"The Educational Status and the Future Challenges" (in Arabic) by Minister of Education Dr. Fawzi Gharaibeh at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation, Jabal Amman on Monday Feb. 1 at 6:30 p.m.

Exhibitions

"Winter 1998" exhibition at the Arts Centre, Shmeisani (Tel. 5529610), until Feb. 14
Works by Mohammad Al Saffi at Books@Café, Jabal Amman, until Feb. 13 (Tel. 4650457).
"The Warm Winter" — works by several artists at Orfali Art Gallery, Um Uthaina (Tel. 5526932), until Feb. 1.
The Tenth Anniversary Exhibition of Contemporary Arab Artists at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh (Tel. 4643251/2), until Feb. 25.

King congratulates JTV

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein, currently undergoing chemotherapy at Mayo Clinic in the U.S., phoned Jordan Television to express appreciation of its Sports Magazine programme, wishing the programme continued success.

The King, who follows the Sports Magazine on JTV, Friday afternoon voiced satisfaction with its programmes which featured the contributions of HRH Crown Prince Abdullah, the

Regent, to sports and athletic events in the Kingdom and presented prominent sport events at local, regional and international levels.

Prince Abdullah is chairing a special committee supervising the preparations for the 9th Arab Games due to be held in Amman this summer.

The King wished Jordanian athletes success in their endeavours and further efforts towards improvements and achievements.

UNMAS endorses Jordan's demining efforts

'We think that the standards maintained by the Royal Corps of Engineers here are exceptional' — Fowler

By Hind-Lara Mango

AMMAN — The United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) concluded a one-week fact-finding mission in Jordan Saturday to assess humanitarian and socio-economic threats posed by the country's estimated 216,000 landmines.

"In our appraisal we gave priority to the socio-economic impact of landmines [in Jordan] as they directly affect the country's agriculture and tourism industries, which are two main currency generators for the economy," said Mary Fowler, UNMAS Deputy Chief and Policy Adviser.

The five-member UNMAS team represents a spectrum of U.N. organizations including the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF).

"The issue of landmines

is multi-faced and has implications concerning health, development, economy, and so forth," said Jorgen Lissner, UNDP resident coordinator in Amman. "This is why this mission is composed of a wide range of representatives."

At a press conference Saturday, the U.N. team said that during their visits with officials, they found that Jordan is "taking demining very seriously and was working hard to clear the Jordan Valley of these deadly weapons."

The team praised Her Majesty Queen Noor's efforts and her commitment to the landmine issue.

"Less attention is paid to these weapons of mass destruction... these indiscriminate killers constitute one of the greatest public health hazards of the late twentieth century, a modern man-made epidemic," the Queen said during the first Middle East Conference on Land-

mine Injury and Rehabilitation which was hosted in Jordan in July. During the conference, Queen Noor announced that Jordan would become a signatory of the Ottawa Treaty that bans the use, manufacture, stockpiling and sale of anti-personnel mines and demands their destruction. Jordan signed the convention in November, and UNMAS commended Jordan's ratification of the convention.

Under the provisions of the Mine Ban Treaty, Jordan has 180 days to compile a report for the United Nations secretary general that includes information on its national implementation of demining measures, the total number of all stockpiled AP mines and their location.

The first meeting of States Parties is to take place in May in Mozambique.

Since January, 60 countries, out of 185 member states have ratified the treaty.

"This is the fastest entry into force of any treaty in history and it reflects how governments and civil society have come together to support this," Fowler said.

The demining programme in the Jordan Valley has cleared 146 minefields, freeing up 3,100 acres of land for cultivation, mineral excavation and tourism. Military officials say the landmines were planted during the Arab-Israeli wars and are found along Jordan's borders with Syria and Israel. Most are located in highly fertile agricultural land; the threat they pose has rendered the land useless by the threat of these mines.

Bethany, the Baptism site of Christ, currently being prepared for the arrival of thousands of tourists at the turn of the century, has also been cleared of mines.

Walid Hayek had 1,200 dunums of fruit trees in the Jordan Valley. In 1975

he unknowingly stepped on a landmine that blew off his left foot.

"I had no idea that my land had been planted with landmines," he told the Jordan Times.

Hayek cannot cultivate his land, and today is waiting patiently for the military to step in to clear his land.

Since 1948, approximately 400 people in Jordan have fallen victim to landmines; 88 have died.

The Royal Corps of Engineers has set the year 2000 as the year the Jordan Valley will be landmine free.

"I don't think the number of mines is relevant, but rather where the mines are located," said Fowler to the Jordan Times.

She added that even though minefields in Jordan are quite clearly defined and the location of landmines is well-known, mines are situated in areas where the population tends to go.

Ibrahim Waradat was ten

years old when he fell victim to a deadly mine while playing in his home town of Ramtha, near the Jordanian-Syrian border. Child's curiosity drove him to pick up a round metal "box."

"I tried hard to open it, but when it wouldn't I hit it with a rock. It exploded," said the 12-year-old boy. Ibrahim lost his left hand, four of his right fingers, his left eye and part of his vision in his right eye.

Tehnaz Dastoor, UNICEF landmine focal point coordinator and part of the UNMAS mission, said more emphasis should be given to promoting landmine awareness in mined areas.

"As landmines in Jordan are not scattered, and their location is known," she said, "we believe that landmine awareness should be in areas infested with mines and should target that particular population."

Landmines in Jordan sometimes are transferred to populated areas by floods, by animals, such as foxes, that dig up mines and carry them to other areas, or by children or adults who remove signs delineating mine fields.

"Accidents occur when people are not informed about mines and don't know that certain areas are a liability, and when children unknowingly pick landmines up and start playing with them," said Dastoor.

"We think that the standards maintained by the Royal Corps of Engineers here are exceptional," added Fowler. "The fact that they aim for 100 per cent clearance is quite extraordinary."

She recommended that Jordan's professional capacity in mine clearance be used to assist neighbouring countries.

The cost of clearing a three-dollar AP mine can reach \$1,200. International figures indicate that one person falls victim to AP

mines every 20 minutes. Jordan receives technical and financial assistance in sweeping its mines from countries such as the United States, Canada, Germany and Norway.

"We will be speaking to donors. We have already spoken to some of them here, but we also will try to encourage bilateral assistance in the way of equipment," Fowler said.

Based on this visit, UNMAS will compile a report with recommendations for the implementation of demining programmes in Jordan, a copy of which will be forwarded to the Mine Action Support Group.

"They are donors and we will make sure that they are aware of our findings and recommendations," Fowler said.

Recommendations encompass an assessment and observations of the landmine situation here, Fowler said.

Indian PM fasts, calls for tolerance

NEW DELHI, India (AP) — Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee underlined his calls for religious tolerance with a Gandhian tactic — a protest fast — Saturday, the 51st anniversary of the death of Mohandas "Mahatma" Gandhi.

Vajpayee's televised address to the nation Saturday focused on attacks on Christians in India, including an Australian missionary and his two sons who were burned to death. The attacks have been blamed on fundamentalist groups linked to Vajpayee's Bharatiya Janata Party.

"Such violence violates the country's tradition and culture of tolerance," Vajpayee said. "Let no one be under any illusion: the laws of our land are clear, and they will be enforced — without exception and to the fullest degree — to punish those who violate this sacred guarantee." Vajpayee said the anniversary of Gandhi's death, a national holiday in India, was this year being observed "against an unhappy backdrop of sectarian violence. The nation cannot but be sad. We cannot but grieve."

His fast, he said, was undertaken in the spirit of "atonement and introspection." But Vajpayee's gesture was met with some scepticism, with The Times of India calling it "fast as farce" in an editorial Saturday.

"A genuinely stricken prime minister would simply resign from office, owning responsibility for all that has happened in recent months to tarnish the country's image," the Times said.

Vajpayee has been lashed by both allies and opponents over his handling of the religious attacks, but his 10-month-old government

does not appear in immediate danger of falling.

Saturday, BJP member Madan Lal Khurana resigned as the cabinet minister for parliamentary affairs and tourism after being rebuffed by party hard-liners for his public criticism of the government.

Opposition Congress party president Sonia Gandhi said in a speech Saturday that Indian values have been threatened since parties "inimical to secularism" came to power. "There has not only been negligence in enforcing the law, there has been collusion and sympathy with the dark forces," Press Trust of India quoted the Congress leader as saying. Sonia Gandhi is not related to Mohandas Gandhi.

A group of writers, artists and opposition politicians who organised a peace march in the capital Saturday accused Vajpayee, considered a moderate within the BJP, of doing little to rein in more radical elements.

"It is this climate of hate and intolerance... that led to the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi," the march organisers said in a statement.

Some 10,000 people joined the peaceful march in downtown New Delhi, singing "We Shall Overcome" and waving banners with slogans against hatred.

Gandhi, known as the "mahatma" — or "great soul" — was shot and killed Jan. 30, 1948, by a Hindu nationalist enraged by Gandhi's attempts to repair Hindu-Muslim relations following the division of the former British colony into the independent nations of India and Pakistan in 1947.

Muslim leaders had demanded the creation of

Pakistan, saying they would be discriminated against in overwhelmingly Hindu India. But many Muslims stayed in India at partition and now form the largest of the country's religious minorities.

Gandhi, a Hindu, often fasted to protest the religious riots that erupted in the tense days before partition.

"I do not expect the India of my dream to develop one religion, i.e., to be wholly Hindu or wholly Christian or wholly Muslim," Gandhi once wrote. "But I want it to be wholly tolerant, with its religions working side by side with one another."

Muslims and Christians marched together in New Delhi Friday, saying both groups were threatened by the rise of Hindu nationalists.

Christian groups have counted some 100 attacks ranging from the rape of nuns to the burning of Bibles in the last year, saying militant Hindus were emboldened when a BJP-led coalition government took power in March. The first fatal attacks came last week, when an Australian missionary and his two young sons were burned to death by a mob shouting Hindu nationalist slogans in a remote southeastern village.

Hindu fundamentalist leaders have denied involvement in the violence, but insist it be seen in the context of what they call the "cultural violence" of Christian conversions.

The fundamentalists say Hinduism's influence on Indian life could be diluted by conversions, though Christians have never been more than about 2 per cent of the country's population, which is nearing 1 billion. Muslims are about 12 per cent.



Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee places rose petals at a memorial of independence leader Mahatma Gandhi, on his 51st anniversary of assassination in New Delhi. Vajpayee observes a day-long fast to drive home the message of religious harmony and peace and appealed for tolerance in the backdrop of fierce attacks on minority Christians (Reuters photo)

Twists, turns continue in Mexico's sensational murder case

MEXICO CITY (AP) — One week after the stunning conviction of a former president's brother in the murder of a powerful politician, reports that the hitman in the case has implicated other powerful figures have created a new sensation.

Prosecutors say that convicted gunman Daniel Aguilar has in the meantime denied to police that he made the allegations. And though there has been no new evidence cited, the claims have nonetheless been front page news this week in Mexico.

The case of the former president's brother, Raul Salinas de Gortari, has had so many bizarre twists — including the planting of a body by a clairvoyant hired by prosecutors and accusations that the victim's brother covered up the killing — that any new allegations are considered as plausible as anything else.

In an interview with Time magazine published this week, Aguilar claimed Raul Salinas, brother of former President Carlos Salinas de Gortari, had Jose Francisco Ruiz Massieu killed because he knew too much about Raul Salinas' criminal activities.

The attorney general's office said Friday that Aguilar later denied giving that interview, and had asked prosecutors on a previous occasion for a million pesos (\$100,000) in return for the allegedly incriminating evidence. The offer was rejected.

Days after the Time interview was published, a Mexican television station received what said was a handwritten letter from Aguilar claiming that Carlos

Salinas, his former chief of staff, two former governors and a prominent businessman also were linked to the plot. Aguilar also later denied having written the letter.

It was unclear whether the new revelations would affect the appeal of Salinas, who has maintained his innocence.

Attorney General Jorge Madrazo said Friday that Aguilar "has ceased to be a reliable witness... we have documented the lies he has repeatedly told." But he said agents had been sent to Aguilar's prison cell to corroborate his claims.

Lawyers for the Salinas family did not return phone calls.

The conviction and sentencing of Salinas to 50 years imprisonment was a bombshell in Mexico, breaking a tradition of impunity for the ruling class. It was especially surprising because the case against Salinas was entirely circumstantial and the judge ruled that prosecutors failed to establish a motive.

Since he was arrested immediately after the shooting and sentenced to 50 years, Aguilar has been mostly silent. In 1997, he told the newspaper Reforma that Salinas wasn't involved in the killing.

But in the Time interview, Aguilar said that he was forced to make those declarations to the newspaper after his common-law wife and child were kidnapped. He claimed Raul Salinas ordered the killing because Ruiz Massieu "was a virtual databank" on Raul Salinas' criminal activities.

Swiss prosecutors ordered \$114 million seized from

Raul Salinas' Swiss accounts in October, saying the money "inevitably suggest money laundering" of drug profits.

An appeals court upheld the acquittal of Raul Salinas on one of two illegal enrichment charges against him Friday. Salinas remains on trial on the first charge, which alleges he had millions in unreported income while serving as a mid-level official in his brother's administration.

The letter to the Multivision cable television station implicated other prominent politicians in the murder plot, including former presidential chief of staff Jose Cordoba Montoya, former governors Jorge Carrillo Olea and Otto Granados Roldan, businessman Carlos Peralta, and the victim's brother, Mario Ruiz Massieu.

Mexico has been trying to extradite Mario Ruiz Massieu from the United States, where he is under house arrest. Mexico claims the former prosecutor tried to cover up Raul Salinas' involvement in the killing.

Aguilar also claims a connection between the Ruiz Massieu murder and that of the ruling party's presidential candidate, Luis Donaldo Colosio, six months earlier. Ruiz Massieu "was a walking data bank who could at any moment expose not just the Colosio murder, but also his knowledge of ties between the Salinas family and drug trafficking," Aguilar wrote.

Cordoba Montoya could not be reached for comment. A spokesman for Peralta declined comment. Granados did not immediately respond to a message. Carrillo Olea could not be located.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Yeltsin discharged from hospital

MOSCOW (AFP) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin was discharged from the Central Clinical Hospital Saturday, two weeks after he was rushed to the clinic with a bleeding ulcer, the Kremlin told AFP. The president transferred to the Barvikha sanatorium west of Moscow where the Russian leader has frequently completed his convalescence following illness. Yeltsin, who is 68 Monday, suffered "fairly serious" blood loss from the open stomach sore, which nevertheless responded to drug treatment and did not require surgery. The Kremlin chief underwent a fresh internal examination Saturday morning ahead of his discharge. Interfax cited the Kremlin as saying, The endoscopy, which involves sliding a fibre-optic device down the heavily sedated patient's throat, revealed that the presidential ulcer was continuing to heal. The Kremlin press service said. Medical sources cited by Interfax said Yeltsin could spend two weeks completing his recovery from the ulcer, the latest in a string of health woes to afflict the president since the autumn. The Kremlin chief has increasingly taken a back seat in the day-to-day business of running the country in the wake of an August financial crisis and a string of health problems since the autumn. Earlier, medical sources cited by Interfax said Yeltsin would celebrate his 68th birthday in private with close family members.

Polls show majority of Russians support Lenin burial

MOSCOW (AFP) — A majority of Russians believe Lenin's body should be removed from the famous granite mausoleum on Moscow's Red Square and given a decent burial, opinion polls published Saturday showed. Some 57 per cent of respondents told the Public Opinion polling organisation that they supported the burial of the revolutionary leader, with 35 opposed and 10 per cent with no opinion, the RIA Novosti news agency said. Fifty-six per cent of callers to a telephone call-in programme on the capital's popular Moscow Echo radio station backed the burial idea, while 44 per cent disagreed. The results of the surveys show waning support for the preservation of the mortal remains of the father of the Russian Revolution, whose body was embalmed following his death in January 1924. According to RIA Novosti, in June 1997, only 42 per cent of respondents backed the burial idea, with 44 per cent opposed. The latest surveys showed the proposal had most support among people below the age of 35 (68 per cent) and in the cities of Moscow and Saint Petersburg (69 per cent). Support for Lenin's burial has been growing steadily since Russia's last tsar, Nicholas II, and four other members of the Romanov family executed by Bolshevik firing squad in 1918, were buried in the former imperial capital Saint Petersburg last July. The royals, shot and bayoneted by Bolshevik guards in the Ural city of Yekaterinburg 80 years ago, were dumped in a shallow grave and their bodies doused in acid to prevent identification. Their remains were exhumed in 1991. Many supporters believe Lenin's burial would help the country turn the page on a painful chapter of Russian history.

Serb killed, wife wounded in grenade attack

PRISTINA, Yugoslavia (AFP) — A Serb man was killed and his wife wounded in a grenade attack Saturday in the village of Rakos, in northern Kosovo, according to the Serb Information Centre (MC) in Pristina. Zdravko Sedlarevic was killed and his wife Dara wounded when attackers threw two grenades, one of which exploded into the couple's bedroom. Two other grenades exploded Friday night in Pristina. An explosion in a Serb cafe injured seven, six of them seriously. Another grenade attack on an Albanian cafe caused only light damage.

Two foreign nuns killed in S. Leone, others freed

ROME (AFP) — Two foreign nuns have been killed in Sierra Leone, where they had been abducted by rebels fighting pro-government forces, the Rome-based missionary news agency Misna reported Saturday. Sister Carmeline, of Kenya, and Sister Sveva, of Bangladesh, kidnapped in the capital earlier this month together with a monk and four other nuns from the Sisters of Charity order, are believed to have died in an air raid in the past few days. Rebels earlier killed one of the other nuns, Indian-born Aloysius Maria, reportedly because she was unable to keep up with their pace. The monk, Guglielmo Zambiasi of the Saverian order and three Indian nuns, sisters Suchelle, Jeremy Joseph and Hindu, have been freed and are in hospital in Freetown, Misna reported. Rebels also released 11 Indian businessmen at the same time, the agency said. Misna said the monk and nuns had been taken to Freetown hospital, where medical staff have been overwhelmed with a flood of gunshot and machete wounds inflicted since rebels first stormed the capital Jan. 6. At least 3,000 people in Freetown have been killed in the fighting. "Sister Suchelle is injured and Sister Jeremy Joseph has a serious fever," according to bishop Giorgio Biguzzi, who said details of their release remained unclear.

Pair of rare birds arrive in Japan from China

TOKYO (AFP) — A pair of rare crested ibises arrived in Japan Saturday, travelling first-class as a gift from Chinese President Jiang Zemin, officials said. The male bird, named in Chinese "You You" (friend), and the female, "Yang Yang" (ocean) each had first-class seats, albeit also in a wooden cage, on a regular flight from the Chinese island city of Xian to central Japan's Niigata. They arrived at the final destination, Sado Island, on a chartered flight amid an enthusiastic welcome from hundreds of local residents. The island in the Sea of Japan houses a conservation centre where Japan's only crested ibis resides. "The two birds from China are young, aged at two, giving us hopes of breeding here," an official at the conservation centre said. Veterinarian Yoshinori Kaneko, who accompanied the birds on their six-hour trip from China, told a news conference the pair were fine and "already pecking at loaches" at the Japanese facility. Jiang promised to present a pair of ibises to Emperor Akihito as "a new symbol of friendship between the two countries" when he visited Japan in November. The species, called "nipponia nippon" scientifically, was virtually wiped out just two decades ago. China has managed to rebuild the population through artificial reproduction methods. In 1981 there were just 130, all living in China save the ageing one in Niigata.

Macedonia seeks to ease dispute over ties with Taiwan

TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP) — Macedonia's premier appealed to China for understanding, saying the Balkan nation set up diplomatic ties with Taiwan to help resolve its economic woes, a newspaper reported Saturday.

The United Evening News quoted Ljupco Georgievski as saying in a telephone interview that he hopes China will understand the country must address its economic problems.

But he insisted the move to set up ties with Taiwan was constitutional. He said he hoped it would not force Macedonia to sever its ties with China.

Macedonia's President Kiro Gligorov, who was not consulted about the decision to set up official ties with Taiwan, Friday criticised his government's move as an "irresponsible and shameful" act that would jeopardise the country's international position and its relationship with China.

Gligorov's political allies, the former communists, lost control of parliament in November and as a result he has little influence on the country's policymaking.

Meanwhile, Taiwanese Foreign Minister Jason Hu said he hopes Macedonia's government can work out the dispute by itself.

Hu rebuffed accusations that Taiwan has used cash incentives to snag diplomatic relations with Macedonia. Taiwan does not engage in "dollar diplomacy," Hu said.

"Of course we take investment remuneration into consideration... we know that ties formed by money alone cannot last long," Hu told reporters.

"We hope they can come to an amicable resolution, let's allow them to solve (the dispute). We don't want to make things complicated for them," Hu said.

Taiwanese officials deny having made any concrete commitments, but officials say Hu will assess possible aid projects when he visits Macedonia in late February at the head of a delegation of business leaders.

Taiwanese business leaders warn that unfamiliarity with Macedonia and the Balkan region, geographic distance and a slower economy at home make large-scale investments in Macedonia unlikely.

Macedonian Foreign Minister Aleksandar

Dimitrov has said Taiwan would invest "several hundred million dollars" in Macedonia's economy.

Establishing ties with Macedonia was a diplomatic coup for Taiwan, which has only one other ally in Europe, the Vatican.

China claims Taiwan as a breakaway province with no right to international representation.

Just 28 countries recognise Taiwan, most of them small, poor nations in Latin America and Africa.

China cuts ties with countries that recognise Taiwan, and there was speculation in the Taiwanese press Saturday that Beijing would use its permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council to pressure Macedonia into disavowing relations with Taiwan.

China could block support for the deployment on Macedonian soil of a 1,800-strong NATO rapid reaction force, designed to provide assistance to 2,000 international verifiers monitoring the situation in neighbouring Kosovo.

Macedonia seceded from Yugoslavia in 1991 — the only former Yugoslav republic to do so without bloodshed.

'Flash film of royals can cause fits'

LONDON (R) — Prince Charles and his long-time lover Camilla Parker Bowles marked a media milestone amid a blaze of flashing camera bulbs — but television viewers were warned that film of their "coming out" could make people ill.

The British Epilepsy Association urged television producers not to screen more than five seconds of the couple leaving London's Ritz hotel Thursday night, a

moment captured in the flashlights of 200 press photographers.

About 15,000 people in Britain suffer from photosensitive epilepsy which is triggered by flickering lights.

Friday, television channels first issued warnings about viewing the Charles-Camilla film coverage and then switched to still photographs.

"It is hard to think of a

royal event, let alone a 20-second royal walk from a building to a car, which has warranted a public health warning," The Daily Telegraph said Saturday of the media frenzy.

The carefully choreographed scene was of vital importance to Charles, eager for Camilla now to be accepted as his partner. Since Princess Diana's death in a Paris car crash in August 1997, Charles and

Camilla have until now appeared reluctant to test public opinion about their affair.

They have been to clubs, restaurants and friends' marriages together but always kept a low profile.

But she has stayed regularly overnight at Charles' St James Palace residence in London and his Highgrove country residence.

Camilla, once nicknamed "The Rotweiler" by Diana,

has also met Charles' teenage sons, William and Harry.

Palace officials gauged the time was now right and tipped off the media about the joint appearance.

The reaction has been generally positive but his staff were quick to stress that Charles has no intention of marrying Camilla.

"The Prince of Wales made clear some time ago that he has no intention of

remarrying and that has not changed," one aide said.

The Church of England refrained from offering any official disapproval of the couple's first public appearance together while royal watchers welcomed it.

"It will stop the hypocrisy and secrecy and give them greater freedom. In no way does it prestage a future marriage," said constitutional expert Lord St John of Fawsley.

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 Jordan Press Foundation,
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What next?

A LEADING Israeli daily newspaper disclosed recently what we been suspecting all along: Israel is developing a live small pox virus as part of its new generation in its biological weapons programme. An earlier report spoke of another Israeli biological weapon in the making which targets certain ethnic groups of people. God knows what other biological and chemical weapons Israel is developing clandestinely over and above its well-known nuclear capability.

Of course neither Washington nor London, Paris or even Moscow are sounding the alarm about these Israeli efforts to expand the horizons of its weapons of mass destruction. This ominous silence is taking place against the backdrop of recent warnings by U.S. President Bill Clinton against the proliferation of biological weapons in particular and the determined efforts to rid Iraq of its mass destruction arsenals.

It is hard to explain this hypocrisy and practice of double standards in the conduct of international affairs. The Arabs will continue to be haunted with the question of why whatever Israel does or develops or possesses is all right as rain as far as the U.S. and its allies are concerned, but not a single Arab country is allowed to develop an even modest means of deterrence to a genuine Israeli threat. His Majesty King Hussein spoke of the mushrooming dangers of biological weapons a few days ago after his return from the U.S. and warned about the laxity of the international community in putting in place an effective machinery to prevent and reverse the tide of the amassing of biological and chemical weapons.

We in Jordan have a stake in what Israel develops and acquires in terms of weapons of mass destruction. The Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty does not give Israel licence to possess any form of mass destruction weapons much less a new breed of biological bombs that target Arabs in particular. We view this tendency on the part of Israel to develop an ethnic-oriented bomb as a racist move fraught with unlimited dangers on all fronts. Jordan is duty-bound to make strong representations to Israel about its military programmes since they pose a real threat to us. Israel must not and cannot take us for granted simply because we have a peace treaty. A peace treaty cuts both ways, and Israel has yet to respect its end of the bargain where it counts most.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

Al Dostour's editorial said Amman's hosting of the 16th Arab Interior Minister's Meeting, coincides with concerns about His Majesty King Hussein's health and his designation of HRH Abdullah, as Crown Prince, and Regent. Prince Abdullah stressed the King's efforts to achieve peace and security in order to get a better future when he opened the meeting, and emphasised King Hussein's efforts to preserve the reputation of Islam and Muslims. The Prince gave a great deal of concern to terrorism and narcotics trafficking, praising the Arab ministers' efforts to establish a comprehensive strategy to combat the two problems, which threaten the Arab Nation's security, stability and future. The ministers' speeches reflect Jordan's respected position regionally and internationally, thanks to the Hashemite leadership.

Al Dostour's Yaser Za'atreh said people who support the idea that Arab and international stands are surrendering to U.S. policy serve to further encourage the U.S. position regarding the Iraqi crisis. Such supporters are, in fact, promoting despair not only for Iraq, but the entire Arab Nation, and this is the most dangerous thing that could occur. Za'atreh added. If Arab and international opinion were in harmony with the U.S., what would be the need for U.S. Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright to tour Moscow, Cairo, Riyadh, Amman and Paris, the writer asked. The journey aims to remove the effects of the recent aggression on Iraq and ease reactions to it, said Za'atreh, who added that internationally, Washington feels the pressure of the Russian, French and Chinese stands, which have issued strong disagreements with the U.S. Although the Arab situation is generally weak, it does not surrender to nor is it in harmony with that of the U.S., according to the writer. Za'atreh added it is not logical to claim that Washington was satisfied with the results of Arab Foreign Ministers' Meeting.

Why Jordan supports a Palestinian state

THE AVAILABLE set of information, and the prevailing circumstances point to the fact that a Palestinian state is, without doubt, in the offing. The declaration of Palestinian independence may take place on May 4, as originally envisaged, but it may be delayed for some time due to American-Egyptian pressures, or in return for American and European guarantees and assurances. However, the project itself is not reversible and, barring unforeseen surprises, will see the light before the turn of the century.

When a Palestinian state is finally declared in the West Bank and Gaza, by virtue of the United Nations 1947 partition resolution which called for two states, it will be a small and poor country, but it will find around 40 other countries which are smaller in land mass and population. It will also be ranked second, after Israel, in terms of how much foreign aid re-

lative to the size of its population it will receive.

The Palestinian state will enjoy a political clout and play a role much larger than its size, for two reasons: the history of the Palestinian cause and struggle which has earned the respect of the world on one hand, and the fact that there are sizeable Palestinian demographic extensions in several key countries such as Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, the Gulf states, and the United States.

Israeli leaders who object to the Palestinian state would like the world to believe that Jordan is suspicious and rejects the project, because a Palestinian state may pose a risk to Jordan. Jordanian officials have repeatedly denied such claims. The official position of Jordan is in full support of the idea of establishing a Palestinian state, and is ready to formally recognise it immediately. As a matter of fact, Palestine already a

full-fledged embassy in Amman flying the Palestinian flag and accorded full diplomatic status.

However, the government of Jordan prefers to see that the emergence of the Palestinian state comes about through negotiations rather than after a unilateral declaration, which may lead to a conflict. The negotiation option looks feasible, because a Palestinian state is acceptable to the majority of the Israelis as public opinion polls have shown. There is no reason to opt for a course of action that may lead to an uneven conflict with the Israelis as long as the diplomatic option is open.

Admittedly the emergence of an independent Palestinian state will have serious consequences for Jordan, but most of them are positive. The mere existence of an independent Palestinian state, together with the right of return to that state will solve a sensitive problem in Jordan, namely effec-

Sunday's Economic Pulse



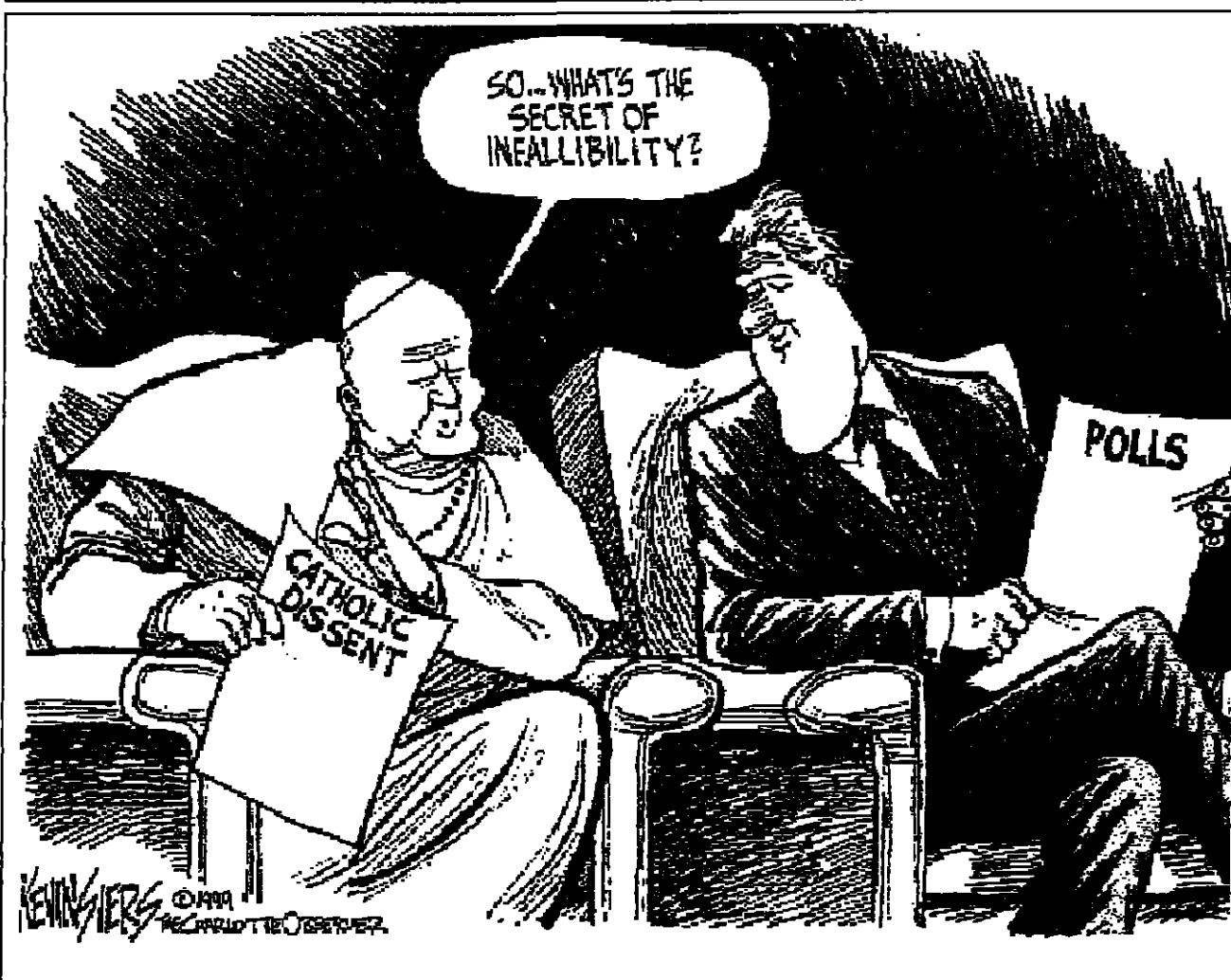
Dr. Fahed Fanek

tive dual nationality, of the Palestinians of Jordan, who will have the right, for the first time to make a crucial choice. They, as individuals, will have to choose between full and final Jordanian citizenship, to be Palestinians residing in Jordan or be willing to return to Palestine. Observers

believe that the majority will take the first option.

On the other hand, the establishment of a Palestinian state will put an end to the idea of making Jordan a substitute homeland for the Palestinians. It will be abundantly clear thereafter, that Jordan is Jordan and Palestine is Palestine, and cards can not be mixed up as some Israeli leaders have been trying in vain to do for the past three decades.

Jordan will obviously be the natural gateway to the Arab World for the Palestinian people, providing valuable strategic depth for the nascent state, otherwise surrounded by Israel. Therefore any Palestinian regime will be friendly to Jordan and interested in maintaining the best relations with Jordan under all circumstances. The two states will develop excellent political relations along with the strongest of economic and cultural ties.



The Republicans have already lost a culture war of their own making

By Andrew Marshall

IT LOOKS as if, after 12 long months, the greatest show on earth — though maybe not the trial of the century — is drawing to a close. As Dale Bumpers, the former Arkansas Senator, spoke on Thursday, there was a strange feeling in Washington, as though a wind were blowing through the city, or a monsoon were breaking. The sense of an impending end was palpable; the new age of After Monica. Maybe not today, or this week, but soon, the impeachment trial of Bill Clinton will come to an end, either with dismissal or his acquittal.

It has been a bizarre year: one of fascination and compulsion at times; of deep tedium and perplexity at others. But the lasting question, and the least satisfying element of the whole thing, is: what is it all about? What is it all for?

For the President's supporters, it is a right-wing conspiracy, a partisan attempt to bring down a great man and reverse the electorate's choice. For his opponents, it is about the rule of law, the Constitution and the crimes of a man who should have resigned months ago if he had any honour. These competing claims just do not meet in the middle in any way. They are what social scientists call incommensurable: they reflect two different world views and sets of moral, political and legal assumptions that just don't match up.

One way of looking at the significance of the whole affair is just this: that what has happened is a visible manifestation of the great kulturkampf between two American value systems, the famous "Culture Wars". This argument holds that since the Sixties, the left-leaning, liberal, secular, modernising tide in America has competed against the traditional, religious, conservative view. Clinton clearly represents the former for most people, while the other side has been led by people like Kenneth Starr, Henry Hyde and Trent Lott, unbending advocates of law and morality (in public, at

least).

The right will argue that After Monica, chaos is come again, and the dominance of White Anglo-Saxon Protestant ways is over. This is over-egging it. Free love is unlikely to break out in the streets of middle America. Cannabis will not be smoked in public buildings (nothing, in fact, will be smoked in public buildings, bars or restaurants below a certain size, for the foreseeable future). The two main candidates for high office in 2000 will most likely be two impeccable Wasps: George Walker Bush and Albert Gore.

It takes a bit of stretching to see the events of the last year as constituting a Rubicon. The nation as a whole has been far from riveted. But to some extent, that is the point. For at least two decades, the right — disproportionately Southern and Western, white and Baptist — has been politically dominant, whatever was going on in the streets of America. Conservatives began their ascent in the Sixties, as the white majority rejected what it saw as the Democrats' shift to the left. They had money, ideology and political dominance on their side. Although the nation changed, Washington, to a remarkable degree, did not.

The hold that the conservative right had on political debate has been broken, in the last year, by its inept handling of the debates in Congress, by the internal wars within the Republican Party, and by its appalling grasp of public opinion. In many ways, the conflict has looked rather like the depiction of the English Civil War in 1666 And All That: the Clintonites, like the Cavaliers, are Wrong but Romantic, whereas the Republicans are Right but Repulsive.

I do not think that the impeachment of Bill Clinton is the culminating battle of a great social shift in the U.S. and the end of the fight over values; I think it is the beginning of another political change: the rewriting of the Republican Party, which has come badly unbent. The party represents a shard of white,

'Free love is unlikely to break out in the streets of middle America. Cannabis will not be smoked in public buildings'

Southern, conservative opinion that is a minority in America, and has been for decades. If the Republicans identify that, and that alone, with righteousness, values and morality, it will make a historic mistake. If there has been a culture war for the last year, it has been mainly because the Republicans have forced one — and they have lost. They cannot blame the moral malaise or the Sixties for that — they can only blame themselves.

Most Americans find themselves somewhere in between the two great world views, and are not ready to be dragged into a war. To the astonishment of the pollsters and politicians, they express views of some complexity instead of stark ideological polarisation, as they might have done 20 years ago. And so they have turned off, which is what, in a few weeks, we shall all be able to do — with some relief, but a little nostalgia.

— The Guardian

LETTERS

Best wishes

To the Editor:

WE, FILIPINO residents/guest workers in the benevolent Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, wish to add our voices in congratulating His Majesty King Hussein, HRH Crown Prince Abdullah, and Prince Hassan, for the very smooth and peaceful handover of responsibilities, which is testimony to the political stability of the country.

We also wish to add our fervent prayers for their personal well-being, most specially His Majesty, for the success of their respective endeavours, and the peace and order and prosperity of Jordan and the Jordanian people to which we have ever lasting attachment and love.

The Filipino Community in Jordan

For a better world

To His Majesty:

I AM sending this because, like His Majesty King Hussein, I too was once in a hospital. Over fifteen years ago I was diagnosed with cancerous brain tumour; a life-threatening illness. I was faced with death and was left to contemplate the nature of things. Only by the grace of God am I here to write this. In the time that has passed, I have learned to be more aware of how we, as individuals, impact the history of mankind.

I believe His Majesty King Hussein has done much to help the world. I believe he stands for peace. I believe he understands that even though the world is made up of different people, different faiths and different cultures, we can all live together in peace. I believe he has done all that is within his power to promote this belief. That is why I take the time to write this, to thank him, and to ask that you, the people of Jordan, continue to support his efforts toward peace.

We may call our God by different names. We may worship our God in different ways. Nevertheless, we believe in God. No matter the politics of our day, our God remains. This is the basis for mutual understanding. An understanding that may very well hold the key to true peace.

The people of Jordan and the people of the United States are not all that different. We are born, we grow, we love, we marry, we have children, we work and we die. And all through the process, we try to carry on our lives and work to insure that the life of our children and family will better than the life we have led. I believe we can best serve this purpose by working together toward world peace.

One day, god willing, I will have the opportunity to visit your country. I can only hope that your King is there to share with me his hope for peace.

God bless His Majesty King Hussein and the people of Jordan.

Paul Swette
 Bentonville, Arkansas
 U.S.

Pursue a positive image

To the Editor:

I must agree with the majority of Arab women, that the TWO shows that were aired in the U.S. in regard to "Honour Killings" was not only inappropriate at the time of airing, but the content in itself was most damaging to the country of Jordan. People here in the U.S. have been successfully brainwashed to a certain extent, and have allowed the media to poison their minds. I am speaking not as an Arab but as an American. I have travelled to the Middle East, and have not only seen, but felt, at first hand, the racist wrath of Israel. It is ironic that the U.S. as a nation will not allow prayer in their schools but supports a nation who actually believes God is their landlord.

The two airings of "Honour Killings" only added salt to the wounds and allowed for the further poisoning of the American mind. It is only logical that the masses who are absorbing the media, will in time develop negative attitudes towards a particular group. If the Arabs continue to allow such negative propaganda on such a large platform, they will lose! The Arabs have to take lessons from their cousins — speak out, defend, uphold and pursue a more positive image through whatever platform available (with the exception of violence) in order to fight back and gain respect. Leave culture and religion out of the issue and pursue a more humanitarian approach, it's the 90s!

Robin Mufti
 Chicago
 U.S.

Children hold the key

To the Editor:

I am a retired teacher and could not agree more with Mohammad Abu Jaber (LETTERS Jan 28-29). If children are our salvation we must teach them, if we are to live peacefully and in harmony, that we are all brothers and sisters.

Victor C. Bush
 Montreal

Rubin: Sound policies key to ending financial turmoil

U.S. urges Europe and Japan to help world economy

DAVOS, Switzerland (R) — The United States Saturday challenged Europe and Japan to finally live up to their responsibilities in the troubled world economy and help end a stubborn global financial crisis that refuses to go away.

Taking the stage at an exclusive meeting of political, finance and business leaders in the Swiss Alps, U.S. Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin said the key to ending the world's worst financial turmoil in half a century was to pursue sound policies and break down barriers to the free flow of goods and capital.

But he warned that the United States could not go it alone.

"For a healthy global economy it's very important for the other industrial countries in the world — Europe and Japan — to focus aggressively on promoting domestic demand-led growth and substantially reduce formal and informal barriers to trade," he said at the World Economic Forum.

Rubin's plea came a day after U.S. Vice President Al Gore delivered a similarly strong message to Tokyo: "Please, we need your help to deal with this global economic crisis."

Washington's calls on Japan to pull itself up by the bootstraps have become more urgent over recent months as the situation in the world's number two economy has shown no sign of improvement. Without growth in Japan, U.S. officials say, the rest of Asia has no chance of emerging from its own deep slump.

As to Europe, Washington has warned the continent not to forget the urgent need for structural reforms that would boost labour mobility and cut red tape as its leaders concentrate on making the new single currency, the euro, work.

But Japan's seemingly endless economic slide has stirred even greater worries — and desperation — in Washington.

U.S. officials have repeatedly warned Tokyo to deal with its precarious fiscal situation and ailing banking sector right away or risk being relegated to the rank of a second-rate economy.

In a sign of growing desperation over Tokyo's slow response, Rubin Friday signalled Washington may no longer be opposed to using monetary policy to shore up the Japanese economy.

He stopped short of endorsing suggestions that Tokyo should print

more money to kick-start languishing domestic demand but said Japan needed to look at "all available policy tools" while carefully considering the effects of using monetary policy.

Rubin reiterated his strong opposition to manipulating currencies or rein in the free flow of capital to that end.

Rejecting European calls to establish target zones for the world's major currencies, Rubin said the key to more stability in the world's free-wheeling foreign exchange markets was sound underlying policies and the will to stick with them.

A sensible exchange rate regime "means floating rates supported by sound policies," he said, adding that aiming at specific currency levels or even ranges risked deflecting from the overarching need to pursue sound domestic policies.

"As we look back over the experience of this crisis, we can see that the absolute key to financial stability and economic growth is consistent adherence to strong macroeconomic and structural policy," he said in the text of prepared remarks.

Rubin said such policies were not only key to calming volatile currency

markets but also to maintaining the confidence of skittish international investors. Trying to rein in the free flow of capital was the wrong way to go about it, he said.

"Over time they retard growth, deter investment from abroad, become harder and harder to administer, and are often used as a substitute for reform," he added.

Rubin, his spirits boosted by evidence that the U.S. economy remains by far the most powerful growth engine in the world even in its eighth year of uninterrupted expansion, insisted that all signs pointed to continued solid growth in the

year ahead.

He played down worries over the nation's ballooning trade deficit, boosted to record levels as exports to crisis-ridden nations have plummeted and imports surged, and insisted the key response should be more openness to trade elsewhere.

Washington, for its part, was committed to open markets.

"It is almost impossible...to avoid the conclusion that the United States has simply been more open to absorbing the exports of countries seeking to recover from crisis," Rubin said.

Asian leaders see no return to pre-crisis growth

DAVOS, Switzerland (AFP) — Asian economies will recover from their financial crisis over the next few years, but should not aspire to return to pre-crisis growth levels which were unsustainable, Asian leaders said Saturday.

Singapore Senior Minister Lee Kuan Yew said the post-crisis economic climate was fundamentally different from that which fostered the Asian miracle of the 1980s and 1990s.

"If they restore confidence and the economy begins to tick again, it will take two, three, four, maybe five years in some countries," he told the World Economic Forum (WEF) annual meeting in the Swiss ski resort of Davos.

But he added: "I do not see growth recovering at six, eight, or 10 per cent, because those ... halcyon

days are over. We are going to face a different world, more competitive, more severe."

The Asian crisis, as well as the economic storms afflicting Russia and Brazil, are a dominant theme of this year's meeting, which has as its theme "Responsible Globality."

The WEF meeting gathers together some 1,000 global business chiefs with more than 250 politicians and heads of state and government.

Hong Kong chief executive Tung Chee Hwa agreed with Lee, and said Asian leaders must look to economic fundamentals.

"There is no particular magic policy, we need to constantly go back to the basics, how to rebuild the confidence," he stressed. "Countries in Asia will come to grips with their problems

at different speeds."

Referring to U.S. economic woes in the late 1980s and European problems, he said: "I have no doubt all of us in Asia will go through the painful process. It may take some time, but we will come out of it too."

The importance of Japan's role in supporting global recovery has been a theme of talks at the Davos meeting. US Vice-President Al Gore said Friday: "The stakes are very high," and appealed to Japan: "Please, we need your help to deal with this global economic crisis."

Lee said that crisis-hit East Asian economies can recover without a turnaround in Japan, but only to a limited extent. "Can we bounce back without a Japanese recovery, yes we can bounce back but not to

the growth levels seen before the Asian crisis," he said Friday.

The Singapore leader said an educated workforce would be the crucial asset for Asian countries seeking to recover and develop into knowledge-based economies. This was in stark contrast to Asia's previous boom years.

"The last time it was simply taking them from agriculture and putting them in industry, assembly line production," he said. "The countries that are likely to do well in the next stage of

the recovery are those with a workforce who are educated and trained for a knowledge-based economies." Tung concluded with a warning that world leaders must not neglect moves to support Asia's recovery, as they react to the other crises in places like Russia and Brazil.

"If the lights go out in Asia the impact on the global economy will be really unimaginable," he said.

Iran expects to earn \$12b from oil exports

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran, the second largest oil producer in the Middle East, expects to earn \$12 billion from such exports this year, according to forecasts made by parliament.

The assembly anticipated total revenues of \$10.6 billion from crude exports and another \$1.47 billion from the sale of oil-related products.

The figures were set out in the government's proposed budget for next year, which aims to cut state spending following collapsing oil prices in the past year.

Iran has been hard hit by falling crude prices and expects

at least a \$5 billion deficit for the coming fiscal year.

The country is counting on crude sales receipts of \$11.8 billion, although Iranian crude is currently selling at around \$9 a barrel.

Iran depends on oil exports for over 80 per cent of its hard currency earnings and its economy is immensely vulnerable to price fluctuations.

The parliament this month approved a 75 per cent rise in domestic petrol prices, though the hike was considerably less than the 275 per cent increase the government demanded in a bid to cut public spending.

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JORDAN DINAR	1.0000	0.1888	0.1827	1.6778	1.8389	0.1944	2.3386	0.2077	0.7080			
SAUDI RIAL	5.2976	1.0000	1.0208	9.8478	9.7416	1.0800	12.3888	1.1003	3.7507			
U.A.E. DIRHAM	5.4683	0.9796	1.0000	9.7448	9.5424	1.0609	12.1354	1.0778	3.6740			
BAHRAIN D.	0.5326	0.1095	0.1026	1.0000	0.9793	1.0353	1.2454	1.1106	0.3770			
OMAN R.	0.5438	0.1027	0.1048	1.0212	1.0000	1.0507	1.2717	1.1130	0.3850			
QATAR R.	5.1434	0.9709	0.9912	9.8581	9.4580	1.0000	12.0281	1.0683	3.8419			
KUWAIT D.	0.4276	0.0807	0.0824	0.8030	0.7863	0.8361	1.0000	0.9888	0.3028			
YEMEN R.	4.8145	0.9088	0.9278	9.0407	8.9533	9.9591	11.2591	1.0000	3.4087			
LIBYAN D.	21.4837	4.0552	4.1369	40.3405	39.5344	41.1769	50.2356	4.4621	15.2109			
EGYPT POUND	0.8577	0.1619	0.1653	1.6105	1.5772	1.6588	2.0057	0.1781	0.6072			
SYRIAN L.	2.2116	0.4552	0.4547	4.5284	4.4346	4.4989	6.6386	0.5009	1.7074			
IRAQI D.	1.9865	0.3750	0.3826	3.7304	3.6531	3.8962	4.6457	0.4126	1.4063			
FRANCE FRANC	8.0880	1.5267	1.5589	15.1975	14.8727	1.5726	18.9143	1.5796	5.7263			
JAPAN YEN	1.6255	0.3076	0.3140	3.0599	2.9965	0.3168	3.8107	0.3365	1.1281			
HOLLAND GILDER	2.7172	0.5129	0.5236	5.1023	4.9968	0.5293	6.3544	0.5844	1.9235			
SWEDEN KRONA	10.8919	2.0580	2.0969	20.4827	20.0288	2.1177	26.4715	2.2623	7.7116			
ITALY LIRA	23.8747	4.5067	4.6008	44.8315	43.9023	4.6416	55.8324	4.9589	16.9033			
BELGIUM FRANC	48.7400	9.3892	9.5852	93.4010	91.4651	9.6707	116.3201	10.3312	35.2166			
AUSTRALIA DOLLAR	2.2545	0.4256	0.4344	4.2334	4.1457	0.4383	5.2722	0.4683	1.5982			
GREEK DRACHMA	3.9560	0.7486	0.7643	7.4472	7.2928	0.7711	9.2746	0.8237	2.8079			
CYPRUS POUND	2.6636	0.5065	0.5171	5.0393	4.9348	0.5218	6.2758	0.5574	1.9000			
AUSTRIA SCHILLING	16.9867	3.2027	3.2886	31.8597	31.1994	3.2968	39.6776	3.5240	12.0124			
CANADA DOLLAR	2.1489	0.4053	0.4137	4.0314	3.9478	0.4174	5.0206	0.4459	1.5120			
EURO	1.2330	0.2328	0.2376	2.3154	2.2674	0.2397	2.8835	0.2561	0.8730			

CURRENCY	US DOLLAR	GERMANY MARK	SWITZERLAND FRANC	FRANCE FRANC	JAPAN YEN	HOLLAND GILDER	ITALY LIRA	EURO
US DOLLAR	1.0000	1.6458	0.5857	0.7110	1.0745	0.8668	0.5198	0.9160
GERMANY MARK	0.6072	1.0000	0.3557	0.4317	0.1060	0.5283	0.3156	0.6366
SWITZERLAND FRANC	1.7074	2.8117	1.0000	1.2138	0.2862	1.4799	0.8875	1.0110
FRANCE FRANC	1.4265	2.3182	0.8236	1.0000	0.2456	1.2191	0.7311	0.8309
JAPAN YEN	0.9301	0.9301	0.4713	1.0000	1.0000	4.9634	2.9798	33.8769
HOLLAND GILDER	115.3700	189.8913	67.5708	82.0283	20.1474	1.0000	59.8702	682.5307
ITALY LIRA	1.9238	3.1681	1.1267	1.3678	0.3380	1.8975	1.0000	11.3812
EURO	7.7116	12.6893	4.5405	5.4822	1.3467	6.8841	4.0085	46.214
LIBYAN D.	16.9833	27.6382	9.9003	12.0180	2.9519	14.6514	7.7864	1.0000
BELGIUM FRANC	35.2159	57.8935	20.6255	25.0380	6.1499	30.6255	208.3378	40.3380
AUSTRALIA DOLLAR	1.5862	2.6286	0.9349	1.1349	0.2787	1.3635	0.8297	0.9430
GREEK DRACHMA	2.8079	4.6240	1.6445	1.9984	0.4904	2.4338	1.4586	16.8116
CYPRUS POUND	1.9000	3.1288	1.1128	1.3509	0.3318	1.6499	0.9576	11.2404
AUSTRIA SCHILLING	12.0124	19.7820	7.0355	8.5406	2.0978	10.421	6.2441	71.0855
CANADA DOLLAR	1.5120	2.5031	0.8802	1.0807	0.2854	1.3175	0.7801	8.9823
EURO	0.8730	1.4375	0.5113	0.6207	0.1925	0.7587	0.4538	5.1646

MAJOR CURRENCIES AGAINST JORDAN DINAR

NOTE: NEITHER ACCESS NOR THE PUBLISHER IS RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY ERRORS OR MISTAKES

CURRENCY	1 M	3 M	6 M	1 YEAR
US DOLLAR	5.0600	4.8700	4.7100	4.7100
GERMANY MARK	6.2900	6.0900	5.7600	5.4700
FRANCE FRANC	3.1700	3.1000	3.0000	3.0000
GERMANY MARK	3.0800	3.0200	2.9688	2.9060
SWITZERLAND FRANC	1.3750	1.3550	1.3750	1.4375
JAPAN YEN	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000

CENTRAL BANK BULLETIN

CURRENCY	ASK	BID
US DOLLAR	0.7000	0.7100
GERMANY MARK	0.2141	0.2162
FRANCE FRANC	0.5265	0.5281
GERMANY MARK	0.1235	0.1241
FRANCE FRANC	0.6114	0.6143
HOLLAND GILDER	0.3875	0.3884
ITALY LIRA	0.0418	0.0426
EURO	0.8100	0.8140

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THE Daily Crossword Edited by Wayne Robert Williams

1 Across: 1. Fear from risk 6. Conform 11. Gratitude 14. Banish 15. "Kama" 16. Fish eggs 17. Swarms (with) 18. Monarch 20. Oat 22. Luanda resident 23. Frenzied 25. Football play 28. Unit of radiation wavelengths 30. Gaffer's gadget 31. Mob meless 32. Robes in ancient Rome 34. Adjective for the Beatles 37. Stick it out 38. Kind of palm 39. Wizard 40. Roach or Holbrook 41. Old World finch 42. Short-term investment, for short 43. Gossip sheet 44. Combat zone 46. Football penalty 50. Pennies: abbr. 51. Cooking herb 52. Actress Vidal 54. Affectionate couple 57. Group of eight 60. Compass pt. 61. Female vampire 62. Don't zaff opera, "di Lammemoor" 63. Observe 64. English county 65. Ariane and Roald

7 Down: 7. Pair 8. of roses 9. Before birth 10. Snaris 11. Musical refrain 12. Jots 13. Hammer heads 19. Drink heavily 21. Black goo 23. Wetland 24. "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes" writer Loos 26. Carrier 27. Acting the ham 29. Barnyard enclosure 30. Columbus's port 34. Punt-returner's signal 35. Shoelace tip 36. Lugosi and Barker 38. Showy flowers 39. Wharton School deg. 41. Printable 42. Merest grip 43. Storm

45 Prime meridian letters 46 Bob and Elizabeth 47. Irregularly notched 48. Landing place on a river 49. Shapes

53 S. American nation 55 Board-game 56 Jazzy Instrument 58 Be II 59 Prosecuting officers: abbr.

Peanuts

NO, I HAVEN'T HEARD ANY DOUGHNUTS CALLING YOU... DOUGHNUTS CAN'T TALK.

MAYBE SO, BUT I'VE HEARD THEM TELL SOME PRETTY FUNNY STORIES.

Andy Capp

WHAT A SHOWER WHO?

THE TEAM

BEFORE I START ON ABOUT THE REST OF THE TEAM, LET'S HAVE A GOOD LOOK AT MYSELF SH-?

HE PREFERS TO EXAMINE THE DAZZLING GAME HE PLAYED

Mutt'n' Jeff

IF YOU WANT TO GET MARRIED SO BAD WHY DON'T YOU GO TO THE MATRIMONIAL BUREAU?

TO LOVE TO HATE A WIFE, SIR?

YESSIR, MAY I ASK HOW OLD YOU ARE?

THIRTY-THREE, SIR!

THEN I SUPPOSE YOU WOULD LIKE A WIFE ABOUT THIRTY-SIX?

WELL, IF IT'S ALL THE SAME TO YOU, I'D RATHER HAVE TWO AT EIGHTEEN!

NOW HERE'S A NICE NUMBER: SHE SAYS SHE'S EIGHTEEN! MARRIED HER ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE FIRST MONTH OF THE FIRST YEAR OF THE FIRST CENTURY!

THE BETTER HALF. By Glasbergen

GLASBERGEN

"You asked me to make my cooking more attractive, so I glued lashes on the black-eyed peas."

JUMBLE THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Mike Arghon

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

CANKS

SYSEM

WOTOWK

BENZAR

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answers tomorrow

Answers: JOINT LIMBO KNotty HANGAR

Answer: A good idea can lead to this — BIRTH OF A NOTION

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Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic Press

Jordanian pharmaceutical companies seek 'contract manufacturing' agreements with multinational strategic partners

** ACCORDING TO the Jordanian Association of Pharmaceutical and Medical Appliances Manufacturers, the volume of medicines subject to patent is estimated at \$12 million. The association's president, Maher Matalqa, said the national pharmaceutical industry has been able to compete with international companies by exercising quality control on the products before and after manufacturing.

Matalqa added that the Jordanian industry fully complies with international standards and specifications and is committed to the "good manufacturing principles." He indicated that many companies have acquired the ISO 9001 certificate and the approval of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration noting that Jordanian pharmaceutical products are available in the U.S. market.

He rejected pressure from a U.S. lobby group of pharmaceutical researchers and manufacturers to cut the transitional period for Jordanian drug industry in the negotiations to join the WTO (World Trade Organisation). "The transitional period is very important for the pharmaceutical industry to adjust and adapt in order to enable it enter the international markets," Matalqa said noting that the U.S. is pressuring for full implementation of the agreement from day one after joining the WTO. According to a report from the U.S. lobby group, the U.S. companies lose \$9 billion annually for the lack of intellectual property rights and of market controls that regulate prices in other producing countries.

Matalqa stressed that the latest survey conducted by the association showed the volume of medicines subject to patents to be around \$12 million including exports. He highlighted the most important challenge facing the pharmaceutical industry to be in abiding by international agreements such as the Jordanian-European partnership and WTO accords. The agreements stipulate abiding by TRIPs or intellectual property rights and give a ten-year transitional period for adjustment starting from Jan. 1, 1995.

The association president urged finding new markets to export generic medicines to them. "We are seriously thinking of exporting to the European Union (EU) as some Jordanian companies have been able to register some of their products in EU states," he said. "Moreover we have started an integrated programme in cooperation with the Swedish government to rehabilitate the pharmaceutical industry in order to enter the international markets."

The rehabilitation covers training and conforming standards and specifications. Matalqa said noting that sales of medicines in the EU states is expected to amount to \$12 billion next year. He emphasised the importance of finding multinational strategic partners to give franchise licensing to Jordanian companies for exporting purposes noting that the search is underway for strategic manufacturing partners at Jordanian plants in what is described as "contract manufacturing" (Al Ra'i).

Microsoft overtakes GE to top FT500

LONDON (AFP) — Microsoft has overtaken General Electric (GE) as the world's most valuable company, according to the FT500, the Financial Times' annual ranking of companies around the globe.

The paper said the reversed ranking for the two U.S. conglomerates reflected the markets' continuing enthusiasm for technology stocks over the last 12 months.

The survey orders firms by their market capitalisation — the share price multiplied by the number of shares issued. Microsoft was worth \$271.854 billion, said the FT, while GE was worth \$258.871 billion.

Next came Exxon. Royal Dutch/Shell — the only non-American company in the top 10 — Merck, Pfizer, Intel, Coca-Cola, Wal-Mart Stores and International Business Machines.

Overall, 244 of the top 500 firms were American, said the paper, 173 were European, 46 were Japanese, 20 were from the Asia-Pacific region, 10 were Canadian, four were Latin American, two were Middle Eastern and one was British-Australian.

Changes from the previous year reflected surging U.S. and European equity markets over 1998, according to the FT, poorly performing emerging markets, economic crisis in Japan, a wave of mergers in the U.S. and Europe and increasing values for technology stocks.

Total profits fall 9%

PARIS (AFP) — Total has reported that net profits, excluding non-recurring items, had fallen by nine per cent to 6.9 billion francs (1.05 billion euros, \$1.2 billion) in 1998.

The result was in line with forecasts by most analysts. Operating profits, excluding non-recurring items, fell by 8.2 per cent to 12.5 billion francs (1.91 billion euros), Total said.

The fall of the price of oil reduced profits overall by 4.1 billion francs but growth of business and an increase of productivity boosted profits by 1.7 billion francs, company president Thierry Desmarest said.

Sales fell by 16.8 per cent to 159 billion francs (24.24 billion euros).

Net earnings per share fell by 9.4 per cent to 28.1 francs (4.28 euros), excluding non-recurring items.

The average price of a barrel of North Sea Brent oil fell by \$12.7 per barrel from \$19.1 in 1997, the company said.

But refining margins increased by eight per cent to \$16.9 per tonne from \$15.6 in 1997.

Study: Worldwide 1998 personal computer sales up 15 per cent

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Global sales of personal computers (PCs) grew 15 per cent in 1998 due to strong demand in the United States and Europe, the market research group Dataquest said Friday.

"Affordability and growing relevance of Internet content is sustaining double-digit PC growth in the United States," said Dataquest's Bill Schaub.

"Dataquest's latest survey suggests that as many as 37 per cent of U.S. households are now connected to the Internet," he said.

Compaq Computers held its lead in the worldwide personal computer industry, with nearly 14 per cent market share in 1998, Dataquest said.

IBM remained second in

full-year 1998 market share ranking, but Dell Computers finished a much closer third than in 1997, having seen 65 per cent growth in sales over the year.

The industry's healthy fourth quarter growth helped push it to a strong finish for the year, the report found.

According to preliminary estimates from another research group, International Data Corp. (IDC), total shipments of personal computers rose to 27.3 million units in the fourth quarter.

That represented a 23 per cent rise from the previous quarter's figure and a 15 per cent rise over 1997's fourth quarter.

Though Compaq retained

its leadership in both global and U.S. market share, it saw its U.S. market share in the fourth quarter fall to 18.1 per cent from 19.0 per cent in the year-earlier period, IDC said.

IBM's global market share for the quarter shrank to 8.2 per cent from 8.6 per cent in the year earlier period, IDC reported.

Meanwhile, Dell saw its global market share rise to 7.9 per cent from 5.5 per cent in the quarter. Dell's U.S. market share rose to 12.8 per cent from 9.9 per cent in the year earlier period.

The U.S. market for personal computers was characterised by ferocious price competition, according to the IDC study.

"Windows 98, Apple's

Mac, and low-cost Wintel (Windows-Intel based PCs) systems fuelled consumer demand in the second half of the year," IDC said. "The year finished with a bang as bargain-conscious consumers picked up PCs in record numbers during the holiday season."

Western European markets also helped sustain the industry's momentum, with faster rates of growth in sales than in any other region for the full year.

But rising sales in both the United States and Europe were somewhat offset by the pummeling impact on PC market growth of economic slumps in Japan, the Asia-Pacific region and Eastern Europe. IDC reported.

Hikma Investment raises \$8.8 million in private placement

AMMAN (J.T.) — Hikma Investment, the largest pharmaceutical company in Jordan, and one of the few privately held multinational generic pharmaceutical companies in the world, offered 1,208,333 shares — representing approximately 7.1 per cent of its capital — to new and accredited investors in a private placement. The offering closed at a price of \$7.25 per share. The Export and Finance, Bank, and Atlas Investment Group co-managed the offering.

International institutional and venture capital funds took the lion's share of the offering with the remaining shares distributed across smaller investors.

Hikma Investment owns production facilities in Portugal, the United States, Saudi Arabia in addition to Jordan and has a broad and diversified export market.

"Part of the company's success has been our flexibility of having several operations which can complement each other when necessary," said Said Darwazah, chairman and chief executive of Hikma Investment.

"Hikma Investment has developed the flexibility of supply, economies of scale, and broad market access that are essential to modern transnational industry," he added.

The proceeds of the offering will be used mainly toward funding ongoing capital

expenditures, and the introduction of new products.

"Despite the recent turmoil in global equity markets and the corrections taking place worldwide, we were able to close the placement at a price of 21 times 1997 earnings (18 times 1998 fully diluted expected earnings)," Ali Al Husry, chairman and chief executive of the Export and Finance Bank, said.

"Based on experienced management, strong growth fundamentals, and solid financials, Hikma Investment represented an attractive long-term investment opportunity," Al Husry added.

Hikma Investment was established in 1991 to consolidate the ownership of all the Hikma group's subsidiary companies throughout the Middle East, North Africa, Europe, and the United States. The company's subsidiaries all produce high quality pharmaceuticals in finished dosage form and bulk chemicals and have extensive global marketing and distribution capabilities. All the major subsidiaries in operation have been inspected and approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) — the only pharmaceutical manufacturer in the Arab Middle East to have FDA approval.

To date, the holdings of Hikma Investment total \$108 million in assets with 1998 net earnings expected to exceed \$6.4 million.

Yahoo! agrees to buy GeoCities for \$4.58b

NEW YORK (AP) — Yahoo! Inc. has announced that it is buying GeoCities Inc. for \$4.58 billion in a deal that creates the largest Web gateway and speeds the fevered spree of consolidations among Internet companies.

The deal gives Yahoo! another powerful brand name while helping GeoCities reach more Web users.

"We anticipate maintaining GeoCities as a stand-alone, very, very strong brand. There's a lot of brand equity in this company," said Tim Koogle, Yahoo!'s chief executive officer.

Yahoo!, based in Santa Clara, California, already has a minority investment in GeoCities, a

Santa Monica company that provides space for Web pages created by individuals.

Dealmaking has accelerated recently in the Internet business even as the stock market has pushed the prices of many companies to new highs.

At Home Corp. agreed this month to buy Yahoo! competitor Excite Inc. in a deal valued at \$6.7 billion. America Online Inc. agreed last fall to buy Netscape Communications Corp. for about \$4.2 billion.

The deal puts pressure on Lycos Inc., the fourth most visited Web site, to find a partner in the fast-shrinking pool of independent search and directory services, known as portals.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SUNDAY, JANUARY 31, 1999

By Linda C. Black, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You don't have any trouble talking your friends into doing whatever you have in mind. The trick is finding a way to finance it. It might feel like some of your dreams are being thwarted, but don't give up on them. Just put them on hold for a while. You'll think of something. You always do.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Looks like people are trying to tell you how to live your life today. A little of that goes a long way with you, but don't be rude. Just tell the helpful busybodies that your life is pretty much the way you want it, and you'll let them know if you need advice. Then, get back to your favourite Sunday activity: lounging in luxury!

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You may have a bit of a hangover, or a few aches and pains. Well, that's what happens when you push life to the limit. Don't complain. Most of your friends are probably in the same condition. You could commiserate with them, but what's the point? It'll do you more good to rest up. You'll need to be in top form again tomorrow.

CANCER: (June 22 to July 22) If you feel like having company over or visiting friends today, pick people you can be yourself around. This is a sweet pants kind of Sunday. You've had enough adventures for a while. What you need now is to relax into something familiar. Play a game you've played a thousand times before, with people whose moves you know by heart.

LEO: (July 23 to August 22) Some of the older people you'll be running into today are really stuck in their ways. You and your friend keep trying to rattle their cages, but they will not be budged. Actually, the people in question are often warm, loving and sympathetic, but only when treated kindly. Be aware today of the influence your behaviour has on the results you're achieving.

VIRGO: (August 23 to September 22) The far horizon has been beckoning for ages, but you've just been too busy. Today you could come up with the same excuse, but don't. Pick out the three most important chores, and do them. Then put your guilt to rest. You need to stretch your legs and your mind every once in a while, by doing something just for the sheer fun of it.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 23)

Looks like there may be financial complications regarding travel plans today, but it really depends on what your true love has to say. If he or she wants to go, you could be talked into it. If not, then you're staying home. Libra is the sign of partnerships. Offer your own opinions, so your partner will know which way to help you decide.

SCORPIO: (October 24 to November 21) Today is a good day to make serious decisions about love, romance, real estate, career, children, marriage... and whatever else you can think of. Consider every option carefully. If you're allowing your sweetheart to participate, you'll have even more interesting things to think about. That's highly recommended, by the way.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You might get the urge to have a garage sale today. Once you get the garage cleaned out, could actually get the car in it, and thus increase its longevity. And once the car is a classic antique, it'll be even more valuable. So you can see how having a garage sale could greatly increase your overall net worth.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 19) There's lots of stuff in fixed signs today, slowing things down, like molasses in January. Traffic will be like that. Conversations will be like that, too. Your head may feel that way. If so, it's only because you took yesterday's advice and got fully self-expressed. It's important to do that every once in a while.

AQUARIUS: (January 20 to February 18) If you decide not to think about anything more serious than which buttons to push on the remote today, you may be forgiven. Your mind has had quite a workout lately, and it needs time to regenerate, as does the rest of you, most likely. Declare today a day of rest.

PISCES: (February 19 to March 20) If you're a typical Pisces, you learn better by listening than by reading. If you're having trouble with a difficult subject, get a video on it. Pisces is the sign of film and one of the signs representing television, and other being Aquarius. Since the sun is in Aquarius, you have permission to watch TV today — hopefully the educational channels.

Birthstone of January: Garnet — Rose Quartz

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Hingis combats Mauresmo power for third Open title

MELBOURNE (R) — Martina Hingis won her third consecutive Australian Open women's singles title when she outclassed unseeded Frenchwoman Amelie Mauresmo 6-2 6-3 in an emotion-charged final on Saturday.

The Swiss teenager locked a brave Mauresmo out of a one-sided match by taking the ball early to neutralise her nervous opponent's power and top-spin.

Mauresmo's courage shone when she saved six championship points against her serve in an enthralling final game, only to succumb on the seventh with a netted low forehand volley.

But the final and post-match celebrations were dogged by a continuing spat over comments by second seed Hingis and World No.1 Lindsay Davenport likening Mauresmo to a man in a distracting lead-up to the final.

"Both of them apologised, so I don't want to talk about it any more," Mauresmo told reporters after her first grand slam final appearance.

The powerfully-built Mauresmo fought back from one set down to upset Davenport in the semifinals, stunning the top seed with her raw power.

Davenport later said she thought at times she was playing a man, a theme taken up later by Hingis.

The comments sparked a flurry of local media interest in Mauresmo and her relationship with girlfriend Sylvie Bourdon, whom Mauresmo thanked after



Second seeded Martina Hingis (R) of Switzerland displays her trophy and kangaroo mascot after winning her third consecutive Australian Open title by defeating unseeded Amelie Mauresmo (L) of France in the final of the 1999 Australian Open in Melbourne Saturday. Defending champion Hingis defeated Mauresmo in straight sets 6-2, 6-3 (AFP photo)

the final.

"Thank you Christophe, thank you Sylvie for being here with me. I love you both and maybe next time, I hope," Mauresmo said in French to Bourdon and to coach Christophe Fourriere after accepting the runner-up's silver plate.

Davenport on Friday accused the media of taking her comments out of context. Hingis has denied she had said to German reporters on Thursday that Mauresmo was "half a man" and flatly refused to say any more after the final.

"It's just between me and her. What's going on besides that, nobody needs to know," Hingis told reporters.

Hounded off court by local television crews, World No. 29 Mauresmo was out-thought on it by a clinical Hingis.

The Swiss second seed fought back from 0-40 down in the eighth game of the second set to enforce what proved to be a crucial advantage after the finalists twice swapped service breaks earlier in the set.

Then came the remarkable final game when Hingis repeatedly planted

winners to all corners of the court, only for the 1996 world junior champion to claw back from the brink with winners of her own.

The 19-year-old drew Mauresmo into long rallies to dictate the course of points in the early stages of the match and broke her serve twice in a lopsided opening set.

"The score at the end pretty much says how it was. I made the important points better," Hingis said.

"This time I was more experienced and that helped me a lot," Mauresmo clawed back from two match points

against her in her opening round match against American Corina Morariu.

She showed the same fighting spirit against Hingis, as well as brief flourishes of the form that saw her upset Davenport and seeded players Patty Schnyder and Dominique Van Roost en route to the final.

Hingis countered with deft service placement, net rushes and astute choice of shots in patient rallies.

Mauresmo conceded that Hingis had too much experience for her, a factor which told on the big points.

"I'm going to learn how to deal with a grand slam final."

It's a lot of pressure, a lot of tension," she said.

The win gave Hingis her fifth grand slam singles title — after winning Wimbledon and the U.S. Open in 1997. It was also her sixth Australian title, her three successive singles titles matched by three straight doubles wins.

The match was the first Australian Open final between two teenagers since Margaret Smith beat Jan Lehane in 1961.

Mauresmo can take some comfort from the fact her performance in Melbourne will catapult her into the top 20 in the world rankings.

Hingis, however, will fall a few points short of overtaking Davenport as number one in the next rankings list due out on Monday.

Davenport took the top spot from Hingis after beating her in last year's U.S. Open final.



Martina Hingis of Switzerland celebrates setting up match point during her win over Amelie Mauresmo of France in the women's final at the Australian Open (AFP photo)

Rafter-Bjorkman win doubles against Paes and Bhupathi

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP) — Patrick Rafter got his first Grand Slam title on home soil while Jonas Bjorkman defended the doubles championship he won last year with Jacco Eltingh.

But for Indians Leander Paes and Mahesh Bhupathi, Saturday's five-set loss in the Australian Open men's doubles championship was just another in a long line of devastating Grand Slam defeats.

"Sure we're disappointed because we fought like hell to even the match at two sets all," said Bhupathi. "Hopefully we'll take it a step further next time." Rafter and Bjorkman, the fifth seeds, received rowdy support from a combined Australia-Sweden cheer squad and scored a thrilling 6-3, 4-6, 6-4, 6-7 (10-12), 6-4 win.

Paes and Bhupathi, the top seeds and playing a 10th Slam together, had lost all four Grand Slam semifinals they played in before this tournament.

Bjorkman and Eltingh knocked out Paes and Bhupathi in last year's Australian Open semifinals and the Swede joined up with Rafter after Eltingh's retirement.

Rafter, the No. 4 singles player, and Bjorkman, who was No. 4 at the end of 1997, make an impressive doubles team and reached the semifinals at last year's Wimbledon and French Open championships.

Rafter, the two-time U.S. Open singles champion, was overjoyed to take a trophy in front of home fans, who engaged in synchronized cheering along with the Swedish supporters.

"This is the first time I've been up here in front of you guys and I've always dreamed of this," Rafter told the crowd.

"I never thought it would be in the doubles but let's hope it's in the singles. I might get it one year." Later, Rafter said the reception from the crowd made him feel "happier out there than winning the

second U.S. Open." Rafter and Bjorkman started strongly and raced through the first set. The Indians fought back by breaking Rafter at 4-5 to claim the second set but Paes lost his opening serve of the third set.

Rafter lost his serve at 2-1 but Paes, the weaker of the pair all match, lost his serve again in the ninth game, allowing Bjorkman to serve out the set.

The fourth set went all the way on serve, although the Inidans had a set point on Rafter's serve at 4-5.

The tiebreaker was a tense battle with the teams trading mini-breaks. Rafter and Bjorkman had a match-point in the breaker but Paes put in a strong serve to get his team back on level terms before it finished off the set.

The only break of serve in the fifth, on Paes' serve at 4-5, was enough to give away the title. Rafter's volley on a second match point ended the contest.

Kafelnikov the unlikely underdog in final

MELBOURNE (R) — Former French Open champion Yevgeny Kafelnikov will be the unlikely underdog on Sunday when he comes up against Swedish danger man Thomas Enqvist in the Australian Open men's final.

Until this week, Enqvist had never progressed past the quarter-finals of a grand slam tournament.

Yet Enqvist has beaten the Russian 10th seed in straight sets in their two previous meetings in finals, has an overall 4-2 head-to-head advantage, and is the hottest player on tour with an 11-match winning streak.

"Hopefully I will get my chances, but I feel like I'm definitely the underdog," Kafelnikov said after routing German Tommy Haas in the semifinals.

In the absence of Pete Sampras, with the withdrawal of Marcelo Rios and Goran Ivanisevic, and with the premature defeat of big names

such as Carlos Moya and Pat Rafter, the men's tournament has been a disappointment for organisers hoping to draw in the crowds with big names.

But the final could have been much worse. A few days ago there was the possibility of Haas meeting Ecuadorian Nicolas Pietrangeli in a veritable battle of the unknowns.

Kafelnikov and Enqvist have quite a lot in common. Both of them are 24 and both have been top 10 players. The hard-working Kafelnikov has won 17 of 30 career finals. Enqvist an impressive 14 of 17 including the Adelaide hardcourt title three weeks ago.

Both also endured poor years in 1998 before dragging themselves back into form. Enqvist warmed up for the Australian Open with wins in Adelaide and in an exhibition event in Melbourne. Kafelnikov fin-

ished off 1998 by making the final at two of his last three tournaments.

"In '98 it was a disaster year for me, except the last three weeks of the year," Kafelnikov said.

"You know, the year-ending was perfect and right after that I knew I was coming back."

"That's why I'm ready to win again, to win a big tournament."

This is the best opportunity, probably, in a grand slam that I ever had to win." In an effort to get his game back on track, Kafelnikov hired a new coach, Larry Stefanki, and the first thing they worked on was his serve.

That is that aspect of the game that Kafelnikov is banking on in the final.

"Without a serve you cannot win the match, you cannot win the tournament," he said.

For Enqvist there were few

highlights in 1998.

From a career-high ranking of six at the beginning of 1996, he slipped to 28th at the end of 1998 and was 22nd starting this year.

The major causes were foot and ankle injuries which required surgery last year and restricted him to only 17 tournaments for the season.

But on Sunday, Enqvist could grab Sweden's 25th men's grand slam title of the Open era, its first for six years, and put his name beside those of Stefan Edberg, Mats Wilander and Enqvist's childhood hero Bjorn Borg.

"Borg was my first role model," Enqvist says. "And then every other Swede that was playing well. Almost every big tournament, we had someone in the final and you looked up to all those players."

ITF considering appeal against Korda let-off

MELBOURNE (R) — The International Tennis Federation (ITF) is considering appealing against a British High Court decision stopping it from trying to ban Petr Korda for a positive dope test.

But ITF communications manager Alun James also said the federation might consider dropping the matter because of the damage it was doing to the game.

"We need to sit down with our partners in this, and think about what is best for the game of tennis," James told Reuters at the Australian Open on Saturday.

"Our other options could include a re-look at the rules to see if there are other areas that need tightening up. Whichever way we go, we'll need to learn the lessons from this case." The

ITF had appealed to the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) after its own independent appeals panel decided not to suspend Korda when he tested positive for steroids at Wimbledon last year.

But Korda's lawyers successfully argued that the federation did not have the right, under its own rules, to lodge an appeal with the International Olympic Committee-established CAS.

James said the ITF had 28 days to decide whether or not it would proceed with an appeal but first wanted to discuss the case with the Association of Tennis Professionals (ATP) and the Women's Tennis Association (WTA).

"The ITF is disappointed," he said. "We felt that the right body to consider this was the Court of Arbitration for Sport and because of a legal technicali-

ty we've not been able to present it to them, or at least currently we don't look like we've able to present it to them."

"But we have been given permission from the judge to appeal his decision to the Court of Appeal in London and that's something we are considering." The ITF appealed to the CAS because it felt its own investigating committee had mis-applied anti-doping regulations by merely taking away the ranking points and the prize money Korda earned at Wimbledon and not suspending him after he tested positive for the banned steroid nandrolone.

But the judge agreed with Korda's legal team when they argued that the ITF did not have the right to challenge a decision by its own appeals body.

The judge said: "It is difficult to

believe it could be intended that there should be a second full scale appeal, with the enormous costs, inconvenience to the parties and witnesses and delay which this would involve." The decision by the ITF's own committee not to suspend Korda angered his fellow players and many of them gave him the cold shoulder as he sought to defend his title at the Australian Open this week. But James said the case had been beneficial because it had strengthened the ITF's resolve to increase its penalties for serious doping offenders.

"We will definitely be recommending an increase for class one substances from one year to two years," James said.

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Listings for films and showing times as received by cinemas and their advertising agencies.

End to an entertaining Super Bowl week

MIAMI (AP) — National Football League coaches rarely pass for standup comedians, particularly at the Super Bowl. Yet Mike Shanahan and Dan Reeves went for a jovial mood Friday as they wrapped up a week of entertaining buildup to Sunday's title game.

Granted, most of the entertainment was provided by the Broncos' Shannon Sharpe and the Falcons' Ray Buchanan. But Shanahan put their dishing match into perspective:

"If you take Shannon Sharpe out of the equation, we have been very quiet," said Shanahan, whose defending champions are seven-point favorites to become the first AFC repeat since the 1980 game. "Now if we didn't have Shannon Sharpe, there would be everybody in this room complaining about there was nothing exciting to write about or talk about."

Reeves talked about long-gone days when he was playing for championships.

"I watched the Ice Bowl game the other day or the other night, actually," Reeves said, referring to the NFL title game in 1967, played in subzero temperatures at Green Bay. "I couldn't sleep. Those stories have gotten so much better through the years. I am a much better player than I was back in 1965. So it's amazing to hear some of the stories."



Commissioner Paul Tagliabue wasn't telling story, but he had plenty to talk about shortly after the coaches finished their monologues.

He discussed the likelihood of instant replay returning to help officials — he almost guaranteed its passage at the March league meetings — and endorsed Lawrence Taylor for the Hall of Fame.

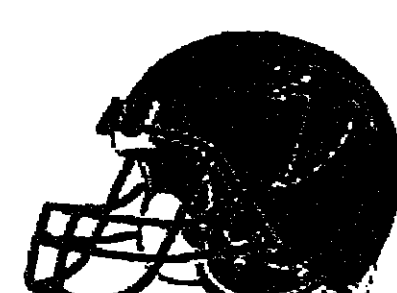
"We, a lot of people in the National Football League, by jumping on the officials ... we got into shooting ourselves in the foot deals," he said, noting that, in general, the quality of officiating "is as good as its ever been."

"I think we will have replay when we come out of the league meeting in March."

He also said he believes Taylor, eligible for the Hall of Fame for the first time, will make it. There has been considerable debate about whether



Actress and recording star Cher poses for photographers at Miami's Pro Player Stadium during a press conference in Miami Jan. 29. Cher will sing the national anthem prior to the start of the Super Bowl. The defending champion Broncos will play the Atlanta Falcons in Super Bowl XXXIII Jan. 31 (Reuters photo)



Omar Brown and Darren Anderson on the inactive list.

"That's one of the things I struggled the most with," Reeves said. "I can't understand why you can't at least have them dress out."

Not dressing for Denver will be Justin Armour, Chris Banks, Cyron Brown and Trey Teague.

They weren't required to do interviews, so Sharpe and Buchanan couldn't insult each other again through the media.

Their trash-talking almost overshadowed some other topics, including the feud involving Reeves and John Elway and Shanahan; the likelihood this will be John Elway's last game; and the novelty of having the Falcons in their first Super Bowl.

Reeves, of course, has been in more of these games than anyone. This will be his ninth, but he's lost all three as a

coach — with the Broncos.

"I don't think there is any question that it would be more gratifying (to win) as a coach," said Reeves, who has overseen a remarkable Atlanta turnaround from 3-13 in 1996, the year before he arrived, to 16-2 this season. "Now maybe I wouldn't say that if I had won my first one, because I can remember how gratifying it was to win that first Super Bowl after struggling and being there so closely (with Dallas)."

"But I think when you go through and have lost three and you feel like you let everybody down, because that is your responsibility as head coach ... it would mean more as a coach than it did when I was a player."

Shanahan was on Reeves' Denver staff for those super flops in the 1987, '89 and '90 games. Now, he's dealing with history.

Before last year's win over the Packers, no AFC team had even won a league title since the 1983 season. Beating Atlanta would stamp these Broncos as one of the NFL's best.

"I thought our guys stepped up and wanted to make themselves special this year by going out and proving that last year wasn't a fluke," Shanahan said. "Character, that is where it starts, in everything we do."

Spanish sharpshooter Castillejo wins WBC title

LEGANES, Spain (R) — Spain's Javier Castillejo hardly lived up to his nickname of El Lince — the Sharpshooter — but did enough to win the World Boxing Council super-welterweight world title on Saturday.

Locally-born Castillejo, 30, fighting in a Madrid industrial suburb, substituted energy for accuracy and took the belt on a split points decision from reigning champion Keith Mullings of the United States.

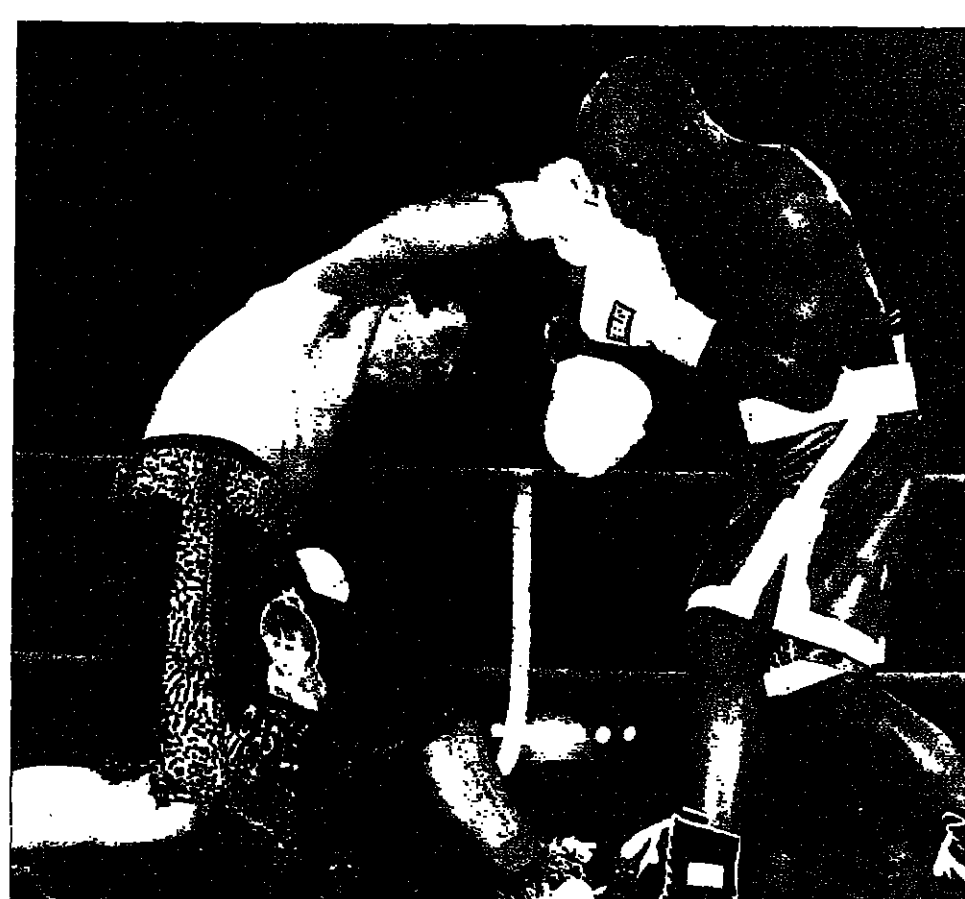
After twelve rounds of entertaining, if not enthralling, boxing the judges' verdict announced as: 114-115, 114-114, 112-116 (Mullings' points listed first).

The result meant that Spain had its first world champion in more than 20 years, Uco Lastra being the last to hold such an accolade before losing the WBC featherweight crown to Eusebio Pedroza in April 1978.

Mullings, who had held the title since December 1997, could hardly complain at the decision despite the close result.

The first two rounds were even but after that Castillejo, who started the fight as the underdog, was always ahead.

Castillejo could possibly have resolved the fight earlier, with



European champion Javier Castillejo from Spain (L) fights against American World Champion Keith Mullings at Madrid January 29. Castillejo scored a point victory over Mullings to win the World Boxing Council light middleweight crown

Mullings looking in trouble during the seventh round, but instead opted for some extravagant showboating.

The Spaniard's antics won him loud cheers from his partisan Spanish supporters, who occupied most of the seating

around the converted bullring, but dismayed the neutrals in the audience.

Castillejo took his career record to 44-4 while Mullings drops to 16-5-1.

The victor's next opponent is undecided but the most likely candidate is

IOC targets more members in Salt Lake, Sydney

NEW YORK (AP) — More IOC members have been targeted in the Olympics' biggest corruption scandal, which now covers Sydney as well as Salt Lake, the committee's chief investigator said Friday.

IOC vice president Dick Pound said an "indefinite number" of names from the 106 committee members have been added to the inquiry since its initial report on the Salt Lake City case was released Sunday.

Pound refused to identify the recent additions to an investigation that already has led to the expulsion or resignation of nine members, the biggest purge in the IOC's 105 years.

But he said fresh information from the ethics commission investigating Salt Lake's successful bid for the 2002 Winter Games, and news involving Sydney's winning bid for the 2000 Summer Games, led to the latest steps.

"We are looking at some of the other members and not just based on information coming out of the Salt Lake City investigation," Pound said. "It's an indefinite number and an indefinite line to follow. We will go where the trail leads us."

The Pound commission found that 14 IOC members, including one who has since died, took almost \$800,000 in cash, travel and medical expenses, lavish gifts and services from the Salt Lake bid committee.

Besides the resignations and expulsions announced Sunday, the IOC said three members remained under investigation and a fourth member was warned.

As Pound's group was finishing its "first sweep" of Salt Lake, word came that the head of the Australian Olympic Committee promised \$70,000 to two African IOC members the night before Sydney won the 2000 Games by two votes over Beijing.

One of those members, Charles Mukora of Kenya, also was implicated in the Salt Lake case and has resigned. The other member was identified as Francis

Nyangweso of Uganda.

Pound said it was "safe to assume" his commission was now looking at member involvement with the Sydney bid.

He also expects to look at the failed 1996 bid of Toronto, where officials said Thursday they spent more than \$500,000 to cover the cost of IOC members breaking or stretching rules.

"I would imagine that they would now come forward with names and details," Pound said.

And he said the IOC investigation of Salt Lake remained open, based on a full review of reports from the independent Utah ethics panel.

Pound said he had no information on Austin Sealey, an IOC member from Barbados who was identified in Friday's Washington Post as a possible recipient of money from Salt Lake that was not evident in initial reviews.

The Salt Lake Tribune, meanwhile, said investigators had subpoenaed University of Utah records of Bold Magvan, a son of IOC member Shagdaryav Magvan of Mongolia.

In Paris, Jean-Claude Gangs of the Republic of Congo said he had 40 members who would vote to reinstate him to the IOC at a special assembly in March. Pound said such a reversal probably would force the ruling executive board, of which he is a member, to resign.

"That would be a serious point of non-confidence," Pound said. He said he would be "very surprised" if the expulsions were overturned.

When he announced the expulsions, IOC president Juan Antonio Samaranch said all bid cities from the 1996 Games onward would be asked to identify members who acted improperly in the bidding.

Pound said those letters were to be mailed from IOC headquarters in Lausanne, Switzerland, on Friday, with a Feb. 16 deadline to reply, about two weeks later than originally intended but still in time for the investigations to be

finished by the special session March 17-18.

And in another of the six investigations of Olympic bidding around the world, the U.S. Olympic Committee said the report of its special inquiry on Salt Lake, led by former Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell, would be released March 1.

In other developments: —USA Today said Ganga and former Salt Lake Olympics chief Tom Welch shared a bank account. Welch's lawyer, Tom Schaffer, said Welch's name was on the account so he could get funds for Ganga if Ganga was out of the country. Welch, the lawyer added, never made a deposit or withdrawal from the account.

—Ganga told the French newspaper Liberation that Samaranch was sacrificing friends in the scandal to try to clear his own name.

—Samaranch resigned as president of La Caixa, Spain's fourth-largest bank. The 78-year-old IOC president said he was leaving because of his age, not the scandal.

—Sergio Santander, expelled from the IOC in the Salt Lake case, was suspended as president of the Chilean Olympic Committee.

—Two proprietors of a defunct Salt Lake escort service told the Tribune their escorts entertained IOC members at hotels during visits in 1995. They did not say who paid for the escorts.

—A Browning rifle given to Samaranch by Salt Lake organisers is worth much more than the \$17,671 listed. KTVX in Salt Lake reported. Leon Burrows, who designed the gun's engraving, told the TV station the gun could sell for up to \$25,000.

—The Olympics' top TV organiser, Manolo Romero, reportedly was paid \$1.5 million for his services during the 1992 Barcelona Games. Spanish sports authorities defended Barcelona's finances against the report in the newspaper El Mundo.

Bordeaux give Marseille footballing lesson

PARIS (R) — Girondins Bordeaux lived up to their reputation as the best footballing side in France with a stunning 4-1 demolition of Olympique Marseille.

Bordeaux scored four goals in the opening half hour to settle the issue early in Friday night's top-of-the-table clash at their Parc Lescure World Cup stadium.

The two teams are now equal on points in the French league title race with Bordeaux ahead on goal difference.

Bordeaux, knowing they needed victory more than Marseille, said before the match they wanted above all to play well and enjoy it. And they achieved just that.

"My team did what they set out to do," coach Elie Baup said.

"This quality of play meant little went to waste and there were four goals to boot. To succeed in this way against Marseille, who are a great team, is even more convincing."

"We defended going forward because we did not fear this (Marseille) team," Marseille fell into the Bordeaux trap by sticking to tactics that have brought them much success this season with a three-man midfield and four men up front.

Bordeaux overwhelmed the Marseille midfield with the skills of their creative pair Ali Benarbia, a French championship winner with Monaco in 1997, and Johan Micoud.

which had conceded only 13 goals in their previous 21 matches, was found wanting for speed.

The Bordeaux attack, including joint first division top scorers Sylvain Wiltord and Lilian Laslandes, made light of Marseille's midfield buffer and hit them with quick, thrusting passes and constant changes of approach.

With former Bordeaux, Monaco and Sheffield Wednesday defender Patrick Blondeau unavailable through injury, Marseille coach Roland Courbis switched William Gallas to right back, leaving the left flank of defence exposed.

Courbis thought that, facing a two-pronged attack, three men at the back would be enough. But Marseille fell prey to Benarbia's superb exploitation of the spaces behind left-sided midfielder Peter Luccin.

Former Bordeaux midfielder Luccin was injured and substituted midway through first half with a right back, Hamada Jambay, coming on and the defence regrouping. By then, though, Marseille were three goals down.

"Luccin's injury posed a big problem for us," Courbis said. "He had an important role to play, at the same time half defender, half midfielder." Marseille captain Laurent Blanc summed up a sorry night for his side by saying: "We've got to admit that Bordeaux were

Coach of Kuwait's national team resigns

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — Kuwait's football coach, Milan Macalla, who guided the national team to two successive Gulf Cups and a second place in the Asian Games, has resigned citing family reasons, newspapers reported Saturday.

The Czech national said he needed "several months in his country and to remain with his family after 17 years of foreign coaching work," the Arab Times said.

Macalla arrived in Kuwait in 1993 as coach of local club side Kazma, which he guided to several cup and league titles before being hired by the Kuwait Football Association to rebuild the national side.

Macalla won two successive Gulf Cups — contested by Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates — over the last four years.

He was in charge of Kuwait's team which were runners-up at the Asian Games in December, losing to World Cup finalists Iran.

The achievement saw Kuwait, where the national league is organised on an amateur basis, attain their highest-ever world ranking, 25th, by the International Football Federation (FIFA).



Ferrari's German driver Michael Schumacher presents the new Formula One F399 Ferrari at the company headquarters at Maranello, central Italy Jan. 30. The F399 will participate at the upcoming F1 world championships (Reuters photo)

Japan wins Ski Jumping Team World Cup but Schmitt stars

WILLINGEN, Germany (AP) — Olympic champion Japan captured a Ski Jumping Team World Cup competition Saturday, but Martin Schmitt stole the show in front of 40,000 spectators.

Schmitt, whose popularity in Germany drew the huge crowd, leaped to the day's best combined jumps of 132 and 131 metres but it wasn't enough for the Germans who finished third behind Japan and Austria.

Japan's foursome of Kazuya Yoshioka, Hideharu Miyahira, Noriaki Kasai and Kazuyoshi Funaki handily won the team event with 976.5 points — the country's

events ever held.

Austria's team of Reinhard Schwarzenberger, Wolfgang Loitzl, Stefan Horngacher and Andreas Widhoetz finished second with 903.8 points on their combined jumps.

But the presence of Schmitt, who has burst out of nowhere this season to become a top jumper, led to trains being delayed and traffic jams as the huge crowd tried to reach the slope.

"The atmosphere was absolutely crazy. I had two super jumps — too bad it wasn't enough for a second place," said Schmitt.

Germany settled for third at 896.9 points with Schmitt, Sven Hannawald, Dieter Thoma and Hansjoerg Jaekle. Norway was a distance fourth at 813.3 points, edging Finland at 805.5 while 4.

Norwegen 813.3, 5. Finland 805.5. Hannawald may have cost the Germans second when he unleashed a leap of 131.5 metres, but lost costly points by dropping a hand into the snow to prevent a spill on his landing.

Organisers are expecting 50,000 fans to attend Sunday's second singles. Kasai edged

Security Council meets to evaluate Iraq policy

Russia demands dismissal of Butler

UNITED NATIONS (R) — U.N. Security Council members met in a special Saturday session to resolve one last sticking point blocking agreement on a review of all aspects of Iraq's ties with the United Nations.

The United States and Russia disagreed on the role of the U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM) and how it should participate on experts panels that would assess and possibly make recommendations on future policy.

Russia wants UNSCOM abolished and its executive chairman Richard Butler fired immediately, although Moscow says the commission's experts can provide information to the panels.

U.N. officials advocate an official role for the commission.

Russian Ambassador Sergei Lavrov said the two sides were close, but the issue had still not been resolved as council members met in small groups behind closed doors.

Council President Celso Amorim of Brazil said "We are hopeful to approve a text

during this weekend," implying there might be a Sunday meeting also.

He called the session in what he said was an effort to put the two delegations under pressure before Canada assumes the council presidency on Monday.

Most nations on the council are generally supportive of the panels as a first procedural step toward working out a new policy toward Iraq following the mid-December U.S.-British air strikes and Baghdad's barring of all weapons inspections.

Canada has devised the plan, whose purpose is to get discussions moving on Iraq rather than conclude a new policy on the future of arms inspections or sanctions. Any agreement by the sharply-divided council would be the first since the air strikes against Baghdad.

The Canadian proposal includes three panels to assess disarmament, the condition of the Iraqi people living under sanctions and an accounting of missing Kuwaitis and others during Iraq's occupation of the emirate it invaded in August

1990.

The most controversial panel is one composed of UNSCOM, the International Atomic Energy Agency and other disarmament organisations which Russia eventually wants to put in place of the commission it accused of bias and lack of professionalism.

Lavrov wanted the proposal to talk about the "experience and expertise" of the commission while the United States advocated "participation" of UNSCOM.

The United States and most council members have endorsed the Canadian proposal, with U.S. representative Peter Burleigh saying "there is a deep division on the council and going to the longer-term questions now is not useful."

So far Washington has not made any long-term proposals in the council on Iraq. Instead it is concentrating on how to remove President Saddam Hussein from power and on the almost-daily, cat-and-mouse engagements over air exclusion zones in Iraq.



PROTESTERS SAY NO TO WTO: Demonstrators hold a banner which reads 'The WTO (World Trade Organisation) kills people' during a march Saturday by approximately 100 protesters through Davos, Switzerland, where the World Economic Forum is taking place (AP photo)

U.S. envoys tour Gulf on Iraq mission

MANAMA (AFP) — U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Martin Indyk met Bahrain's emir here Saturday at the start of a Gulf tour to brief the region on Washington's efforts to overthrow Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.

"I had the opportunity to explain to the emir [Sheikh Issa Ben Salman Al Khalifa] ... our approach which is based on three pillars," Indyk told reporters before flying off to Qatar.

He said they were to restore consensus in the U.N. Security Council, to expand the U.N. humanitarian programme for Iraq, and work for a change of government in Baghdad.

"The third pillar of our approach is a new pillar which is to seek a change in the regime in Iraq by sup-

porting the aspirations of the Iraqi people for a better existence under a more representative government," said Indyk.

He defended the U.S. and British enforcement of "no-fly zones" in both northern and southern Iraq that has sparked a series of U.S. air strikes since December.

The aim was to contain Saddam and "restrict his ability to threaten his people," said Indyk, who is assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern affairs.

Bahrain, which is currently a non-permanent member of the Security Council and also serves as Gulf base of the U.S. Fifth Fleet, on Friday joined Malaysian criticism at the United Nations of the exclusion zones.

The zones had been "arbitrarily" imposed and "run counter to the U.N. charter," charged Malaysia.

On the heels of a visit to Saudi Arabia by Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, Indyk was due in Kuwait on Sunday along with Frank Riocardone, newly-named U.S. special representative for transition of Iraq.

"They will hold talks with senior Kuwaiti officials on Iraq, the Middle East peace process and other issues of bilateral concern," said a U.S. embassy spokesman in Kuwait City.

Kuwait's leading newspaper, Al Qabas, said the United States was aiming to set up five camps near Iraq's borders to train some 10,000 opposition fighters

as part of a united "Iraqi Liberation Army."

But Indyk steered clear of the report. "I haven't seen the report but it doesn't sound like anything that we have talked about with the governments here," he told AFP.

Indyk said the overthrow of Saddam was "a complex and difficult task, and therefore we are not operating on the assumption that it is going to happen quickly, although it will be nice if it did."

In Qatar, meanwhile, Fifth Fleet Commander Vice Admiral Charles Moore met Crown Prince Jasssem Ben Hamad Al Thani on Saturday for talks on boosting military cooperation, the official Qatari news agency QNA reported.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Assad meets Archbishop of Canterbury

DAMASCUS (R) — Syria's President Hafez Al Assad met the Archbishop of Canterbury, George Carey, on Saturday for talks on the Middle East peace process and growing tension in the area, presidential spokesman Jibril Kourieh said. Kourieh said Carey led an Anglican church delegation to the talks which were attended by British ambassador to Damascus Basil Eastwood and Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Shara'a. Carey leaves on Sunday for Lebanon after a four-day official visit to Syria.

German woman released in Yemen

SANAA (AFP) — Yemeni tribesmen have released a German woman they kidnapped on Tuesday, a spokesman for the Yemeni security services said Saturday. She was released on Friday, the spokesman said. The tribesmen had earlier set free her Yemeni husband, three children and brother-in-law. The woman's German mother and brother were still being detained. The group was abducted Tuesday night in northern Yemen and taken to the Bara region, 180 kilometres from the capital Sanaa, sources in the security services said. The woman, a midwife working in Yemen, was released so she could carry the kidnappers' demands to the authorities, the spokesman said. At first, she was under orders to return to them, but the tribesmen later told the German embassy that she could remain free, he added.

Kurd party vows successor if closed

ANKARA (R) — Turkey's main Kurdish party said on Saturday a similar party would emerge if the Constitutional Court ordered its ban. Chief Prosecutor Vural Savas on Friday presented the court with a 56-page indictment against HADEP accusing it of acting as a recruiting centre for separatist Kurdish rebels. "This is a political case, not a legal one," HADEP Deputy Chairman Osman Ozcelik told a news conference. "HADEP [The People's Democracy Party] is not despairing and nor are its voters. If it is closed, there are enough people and ideas to establish 10 HADEP's in its place," he said. A statement by Savas said there was an organic link between HADEP and Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) rebels who are fighting for self-rule in the mainly Kurdish southeast. HADEP advocates a negotiated settlement of the conflict.

Turkish troops kill 11 Kurd rebels

DIYARBAKIR (R) — Turkish troops killed 11 Kurdish guerrillas in clashes in the southeast of the country, security officials said on Saturday. A statement from the emergency rule governor's office said soldiers fought with Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) rebels on Friday night in Sirnak province. More than 29,000 people have died in 14 years of conflict between the Turkish armed forces and the PKK, which is fighting for self-rule in the mainly Kurdish southeast.

Double suicide after child's murder

MUSCAT (AFP) — An Indian couple in Oman committed suicide after strangling their three-and-a-half-year-old child, police said Saturday. The police, quoted by the official news agency ONA, said the child's body was found with his hands tied on the bed of his family's home in Seeb province, near the capital. The mother and father hanged themselves from a ventilator and a suicide note was found, police added, without giving details of the family tragedy on Tuesday.

'Eighty killed in dispute in Sudan'

KHARTOUM (R) — More than 80 people were killed and 36 injured this month in clashes between nomads and farmers over grazing rights in Sudan, a Khartoum newspaper said on Saturday. The private Al Rai Al Aam daily quoted a local villager and security officials as saying the clashes near the town of Gencina, some 1,000 kms west of Khartoum, were brought under control on Jan. 19.

Iranian, Egyptian FM's meet in Davos

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran's Foreign Minister Kamal Kharazi has held talks with his Egyptian counterpart Amr Musa on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, the official Iranian news agency IRNA reported Saturday. The two ministers in their talks on Friday discussed various issues, including the latest developments in Iraq, Israel and disarmament, it said, without giving details. They decided that the two Muslim countries will boost cooperation at international forums and revise a treaty on non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in the year 2000.

Palestinians ready for trilateral Washington meeting

GAZA CITY (AFP) — The Palestinian cabinet Saturday reaffirmed its agreement to attend three-way talks with Israel and the United States in Washington early next month despite Israeli resistance to the meeting.

"We have accepted the American initiative to go to a trilateral meeting in Washington" aimed at ending the deadlock in implementation of the Wye River peace accord, said chief Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat.

"We will accept what the American administration will say, because we have implemented all our obligations and commitments," he added.

Israel has told the United States that it will not attend such a meeting because of what it claims are Palestinian violations of the Wye River land-for-security agreement.

The Israelis have said that they are not against the idea of a three-way meeting, but that the time is not right.

U.S. spokesmen have said that such an initiative was on the table, but that no formal invitations had been issued for the talks.

Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has refused to carry out promised troop withdrawals from the West Bank required by the October agreement, citing what he says are Palestinian failures to honour their promises to crack down on anti-Israel activities in areas already under its control.

Deep divisions over Netanyahu's handling of the peace process led parliament last month to call early elections for May and early June and the campaign has further dampened hopes for progress.

'Algeria rebels kill seven soldiers'

ALGIERS (R) — Seven Algerian soldiers died when a band of Islamists sprayed a military convoy with machine-gun fire in an ambush, a local newspaper said Saturday.

About 100 rebels, hiding on both sides of the road, attacked the convoy near a forest in the Relizane area, 260 kilometres west of Algiers, La Tribune daily said.

The guerrillas then snatched weapons and uniforms from the soldiers, seven of whom were wounded, and fled into nearby woodland, it said.

Le Quotidien d'Oran, carrying a report on Wednesday's ambush, said the rebels were members of the Armed Islamic Group, Algeria's most radical Islamist guerrillas.

The ambush was the latest in a series of attacks on troops in the past 14 months in which more than 50 soldiers have been killed.

At least 16 soldiers were killed and 11 wounded in two ambushes two weeks ago in the Tizi-Ouzou area, 90 kilometres east of Algiers, and in the Tialet region, 220 kilometres southwest of the capital.

There was no immediate confirmation from the

authorities, who are tight-tipped on casualties among government forces.

In another incident, government security forces said on Saturday Islamists slashed the throats of five people overnight in a hamlet in western Algeria. The killings took place in Bekhassia village in Chlef province, 160 kilometres west of Algiers, the security forces said in a statement carried by the official Algerian news agency APS.

Chlef province is one of the main hotbeds of violence in Algeria. At least 50 villagers were killed in a rebel raid in December there.

Liberte newspaper said on Saturday that troops killed 15 rebels on Friday in Tialet. The rebels were suspected of killing seven soldiers in an ambush in Tialet two weeks ago, it said.

Algeria has been racked by violence since early 1992 when the authorities cancelled a general election in which radical Islamists had taken a commanding lead.

More than 65,000 people — civilians, rebels and troops — have been killed in the seven past years, according to Western estimates.

Israeli 'spies' could get up to three years in jail in Cyprus

NICOSIA (AP) — Two Israelis whose spying charges were replaced by less serious counts in a plea bargain deal could be looking at two to three years in prison, a Cypriot legal source said Saturday.

But even a custodial sentence for Udi Hargov and Igal Damary may not entirely dismiss suspicions that Cyprus struck the deal under outside pressure. Opposition politicians have accused the government of humiliating the country as a result of the deal.

Attorney General Alecos Markides, however, insists that dropping the spying and conspiracy charges, under which each of the two could have gotten a maximum of 10 years in jail, had nothing to do with outside interference.

"I believe under the circumstances that our side moved correctly and it was done in the public interest. It's a satisfactory result," he said.

But Markides appeared to contradict his own version when he disclosed that his Israeli counterpart, Elyakim Rubinstein, had been to Cyprus twice since the Nov. 6 arrest of the two men to discuss the case.

He also said that President Glafcos Clerides and Foreign

Minister Yiannakis Cassoulides had been approached about the case by the Israeli government, several U.S. senators and a cabinet minister from a European Union country that he did not name.

Hargov, 37, and Damary, 49, had the conspiracy and spying charges against them dropped on Friday. In return, they changed their plea to guilty on a charge of illegal possession of telecommunications equipment and entered the same plea to a new charge of approaching a restricted area. They are to appear in court on Monday for sentencing.

The first charge carries a maximum penalty of one year imprisonment, while the second a maximum sentence of six years in jail.

"The two can realistically expect to be jailed for two or maybe three years," said the legal source who is close to the case. He spoke on condition of anonymity.

He said he partly based his predication of a custodial sentence on the grounds that the defence had produced nothing to prove that they were indeed on the island not to spy.

Beggar turns out to be wealthy landlady

CAIRO (AFP) — An old woman in her 80s, arrested while begging in central Cairo, turned out not to be as poor as she appeared, a court discovered on Saturday. Zeinab Madbouli, 81, told police she was forced to beg to feed herself, but when asked to empty her pockets, among items that fell out was a contract showing her to be the owner of a block of flats. No longer able to sustain her story, she admitted owning two more buildings in working class districts of the capital, acquired over a lifetime of begging in the streets. The court put her wealth at some \$100,000.

Women protest ambassador's chic cheek

WELLINGTON (AFP) — It's not the first time a group of New Zealanders has protested in outrage at the French. But unlike previous groups which have protested against the now-ceased French nuclear testing in the Pacific, some 20 angry women on the streets of Wellington on Friday were protesting against something more personal — differences on dress sense. Departing French Ambassador Jacques Le Blanc has aroused the ire of the capital's women by slandering their fashion sense, telling the Wellington Dominion newspaper Friday they dressed "like soldiers" and gave "the impression of wanting to look like men."

Prison turned hotel now cosy and hospitable

LUCERNE (AFP) — A one-time prison in the central Swiss town of Lucerne has been converted into a bargain hotel and cultural centre, and will open its doors April 1, the Swiss news agency ATS said. The 160-bed hotel, whose decor theme is, not surprisingly, "bare and bars," will offer competitive prices, charging \$14.25 for the cheapest room, according to ATS. The new hotel, called Loewengraben (The Lions' Den), is targeting a young and budget clientele, a market that has remained largely untapped in touristy, and pricey, Lucerne.

Instructions for a Millennium baby

WELLINGTON (R) — Couples seeking the ultimate status symbol of a baby born at the dawn of the year 2000 should seek to conceive on April 9, a New Zealand newspaper reported. That matches up with the length of a human pregnancy, Richard Fisher, co-author of the book "Making Babies," told the Manukau Evening News. However, he acknowledged the chance of having one of the first babies born in the year 2000 was only around six per cent, even if the April date was acted upon. But Fisher had a tip to help improve the chances — plenty of sex beforehand for the father.

Poets take to the confessional

LONDON (R) — Like sinners consulting a priest, aspiring British poets are being given a chance to take to the confessional to see if their odes are any good. Professional poet Ian Duhig is to man the confessional-style booth at poetry workshops being staged in northern England. "A lot of people are embarrassed about their poetry," said Robert Walters of Bradford Libraries Service, who came up with the idea. "Half an hour of a professional poet's time, in confidence, seemed a good offer to make to people who normally only read to families and friends," he told Saturday's Daily Telegraph.

Yemen court hears call for media ban in trial of bomb suspects

ADEN (AFP) — The prosecution called Saturday for a media ban on the second day of the trial of five British Muslims and an Algerian accused of plotting a New Year's Eve bombing campaign in this southern Yemeni city.

Two policemen, meanwhile, told the court in Aden that explosives and arms were found in a car rented by the suspects, a charge denied by Malik Harura and Mohsin Ghailan, two of the Britons.

The prosecutor's office urged the judge to impose a media ban because of what it called "false reports that could influence the course of justice."

The judge, without issuing a decision, called for journalists "to respect the truth." But the media were pre-

vented from taking photos or using satellite telephones after the hearing was adjourned until Monday.

In London, a European human rights organisation voiced concern over the request to hold the trial in camera and called for a one-month adjournment to give the defence enough time to prepare its case.

"We are monitoring the situation very closely," Stephen Jakobi, director of Fair Trials Abroad, told AFP.

"The prosecution applied to have the whole trial held in camera because of misreportings by the press. What we are witnessing is what amounts to a determination not to hold a fair trial," charged Jakobi.

"Either they adjourn for a month,

and start again, preferably with a different judge, or the whole thing is a judicial farce."

The policemen in court said the guns were found in a car stopped on the road between Aden and Abyan, a neighbouring region in south Yemen. A third witness said he had rented the car to Harura and Ghailan.

They stopped the car because it was driving on the wrong side of the road, the policemen said.

The suspects drove off at high speed, raising suspicion, after showing the rental agreement. The policemen said they gave chase and found the car abandoned, with the arms left behind.

On Wednesday, the first day of the trial, three more Britons were arrested

and accused of involvement in the same plot.

British consular officials have not been granted access to the new suspects, who did not appear in court, but they have been allowed to attend the hearings.

A defence lawyer, Badr Basunaid, walked out after protesting to the judge that a doctor from Britain had not yet been allowed to see the defendants despite the court's authorisation on Wednesday.

Saddaf Alam from Manchester has warned that two of the suspects, Samad Ahmad and Ghulam Hussein, have serious medical histories and need treatment.